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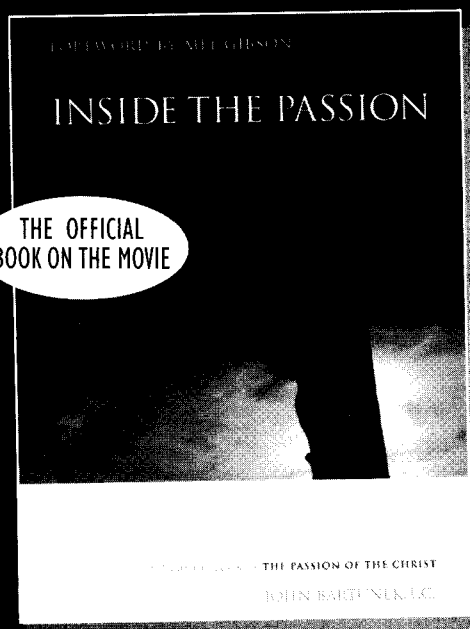

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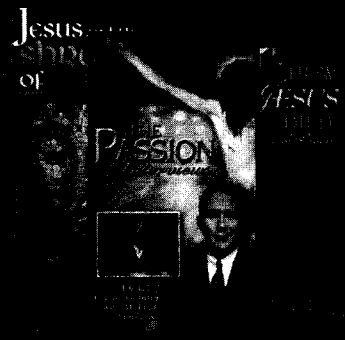

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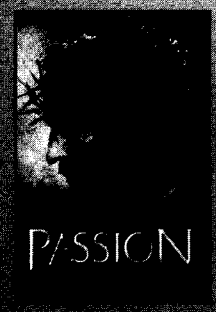

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FIRST THINGS

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A Moral Moment Missed?

Richard John Neuhaus' "Internationalisms" (Public Square, December 2004) fails to discuss the current war in terms of just war theory, which include just cause, right intention, competent authority, reasonable chance of success, proportionality of ends, and last resort. For example, in the essay's section on "defining success," Father Neuhaus writes, "Finally, success will be if, three or thirty years from now, Afghanistan and Iraq have reasonably decent and stable governments, operating under something believably like the rule of law. . . ." This lacks the specificity to qualify as a serious application of just war theory. If we don't know if it will take three or thirty years, of what value is the criterion of "reasonable chance of success"? (I wonder in passing what the Pentagon chiefs would say to a planner who said an invasion would take "three to thirty years" to succeed.) And if we face, as perhaps we do, thirty years of counterinsurgency, what would this say about the criterion of "proportionality of ends"?

I do not believe the erudite Fr. Neuhaus meant his essay to be a serious, detailed application of just war theory to our current circumstances. Yet in the midst of what he acknowledges will be "a very long struggle," doesn't FIRST THINGS owe its readers just that?

Craig White
Nairobi, Kenya

RJN replies:
We have in fact published serious explorations applying just war doctrine to current conflicts. The real-life utility of just war doctrine is a perennial question. One always hopes there is a connection between theory and action but, quite apart from affecting policy, there are many questions of great moral moment that must be engaged simply because we are moral beings and aspire to being responsible moral beings. The definition of "success" as I discussed it is a political question, not a military question for the Pentagon chiefs. Finally, the "preserving, clarifying, and refining of just war doctrine," such as was done by James Turner Johnson in the January issue, is an indispensable service. Readers may agree or disagree with such presentations of the teaching and also with the teaching's application to what they understand to be the facts of a particular conflict. And that, it seems to me, is just as it should be.

A New Formula

In his response to the many fine commentaries on the twentieth anniversary of the publication of *The Naked Public Square* (November 2004), Richard John Neuhaus states that he would now write less about "transcendence" and more about the human capacity for reason, including moral reason. He adds, "Natural law enters here, but someone has to come up with a better term than natural law, which is too easily seen as a peculiarly Catholic thing." Permit me to propose as a nonthreatening, not overtly religious formula for addressing questions of moral reason in the public square the term "the received moral wisdom of the American people." The natural law arguments related to homosexual marriage, the sanctity of human life, and other issues can easily be

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subsumed under this formula. Some might criticize this term as a synonym for unexamined popular prejudice, but they would expose themselves to the charge of harboring an elitist contempt for the convictions of the American people.

This formula is perhaps better suited to rhetorical use in public discourse than for rigorous intellectual analysis (where the battle to vindicate natural law should continue), but "the received moral wisdom of the American people" is far from being an expression of empty propaganda. I suspect that most students of American culture fifty years ago would have been comfortable with the term and could have identified its principal tenets with ease. That their successors might now be stumped by the expression demonstrates the intervening decay of the intelligentsia.

Adrian Straley
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

RJN replies:
I am sympathetic to the point but not persuaded. Human beings, including Americans, are endowed with a natural moral wisdom, and are also prone to acting against it. Using the phrase "the received moral wisdom of the American people" in political discourse would likely encourage sinful pride, which would be most unwise.

Corrections

I am grateful to Fr. Neuhaus for his kind words about my essay on "The Pledge of Allegiance and the Limited State" (Public Square, December 2004). I would like to make one correction, however: I teach at the University of St. Thomas School of Law in Minneapolis–St. Paul, not in Houston.

Thomas C. Berg
University of St. Thomas
School of Law
Minneapolis, Minnesota

In a notice of Leonard Sussman's *A Passion for Freedom* reference was made to the American Jewish Council. That should be the American Council for Judaism. Also, it might have been more explicitly stated that Mr. Sussman's views on Judaism and Zionism are his own and not those of Freedom House, the organization he led for many years.

Choir-Loft Confession

"I Sing Because I'm Happy" and "How Can I Keep from Singing"—
O anthems of my ancestors, if only that were true.
I warble in the choir because I couldn't keep from wringing
The necks of my descendants if we had to share a pew.

Julie Stoner

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Opinion

To Fast Again

Eamon Duffy

The renewal inaugurated by the Second Vatican Council sprang in large part from the liberating discovery of the depth and variety of Catholic tradition. Yet paradoxically the post-conciliar reforms were sometimes implemented in a spirit of philistine dismissal of "tradition" as nothing more than the dead hand of the past. In shedding a past perceived as sterile and oppressive, much that was profound and life-giving was also lost. One of the saddest casualties of that process was the effective abolition of the Church's ancient observances of fasting and abstinence.

The ritual observance of dietary rules—fasting and abstinence from meat in Lent, and abstinence from meat and meat products every Friday, as well as the eucharistic fast from midnight before the reception of Communion—were as much defining marks of Catholicism before the council as abstention from pork is a defining characteristic of Judaism. The Friday abstinence in particular was a focus of Catholic identity which transcended class and educational barriers, uniting "good" and "bad" Catholics in a single eloquent observance. Here was a universally recognized expression of Catholicism which was nothing to do with priests or authority.

But instead of seeing this as one of its greatest strengths, it was often used as an argument against Friday abstinence. Bad or badly instructed Catholics—who it was thought drank their wages or beat their wives, yet who were nevertheless punctilious in eating fish on Fridays—were adhering to the mere externals, it was claimed, while ignoring the essence of "real" Christianity. What was needed was a more spiritual sort of religion that offered no such crutches to lame practice.

So fasting is now confined to a derisory two days of the year, and compulsory Friday abstinence has been replaced by a genteel and totally individualistic injunction to do some penitential act on a Friday—an injunction, incidentally, that most Catholics know nothing about. What had been a corporate mark of identity has been marginalized into an individualistic option.

Why did it happen? Certainly not because fasting was in some sense peripheral to Catholicism, an inessential and minor aspect of the tradition that needed tidying away. Fasting was an important element in Israelite religion, and Christ's own defense of his disciples' failure to fast during his lifetime specifically envisaged that they would fast after his death. From at least the end of the first century Christians have observed Fridays, and later the forty days of Lent, as fast days in commemoration of the passion. At the heart of Catholicism for a millennium and a half lay a dialectical dividing of time, a rhythmic movement between the poles of fast and feast, Lent and Easter, renunciation and affirmation.

Catholics shared that rhythm with most of the world's great religious traditions, a fact which ought to have suggested that there was something essential about fasting not only for our specific identities as Catholic Christians, but as religious beings—as human beings. But since 1967 what was once a truly corporate observance, reminding us of the passion of Christ, of our own spiritual poverty and, even more concretely, of the material poverty of most of the human race, reminding us what it was like to be hungry, has become another individual consumer choice, like going on a diet. Though we pay liturgical lip-service to the old dialectic, and still nominally observe Lent, in practice all our time now has become "ordinary time," and there is nothing in this respect to distinguish Catholics from anyone else.

Yet religious communities depend on the differentiation provided by such shared observances to sustain their identities. The long and noble pilgrimage of Israel through a multitude of cultures and times, without a temple, without a priesthood, has been possible, at least in part, because of the unifying and sustaining effect of their dietary laws. The Jews knew who they were because of what they did and did not eat. Christian fasting and abstinence did not, of course, spring from a ritual distinction between clean and unclean meats, but it was just as deeply embedded in theological conviction as the older dispensation. Its abandonment was not therefore a simple change in devotional habit, but the signal of a radical discontinuity in the tradition and a decisive shift in theological perception.

The theological and practical shift represented by this abandonment of an ancient part of the tradition was not merely a matter of theological emphasis, and more, too, than a question of whether ascetical exercises like fasting are good for the character. What was also at stake was the Church's prophetic integrity: its claim to solidarity with the poor. Considered from this perspective, compulsory fasting and abstinence, practiced regularly, routinely, and in common, was a recognition by the Church that identification with the poor and hungry, with those who know themselves to be needy before God because they were needy among men, is not an option for Catholics, but a necessary

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and definitive sign of their redemption, as essential in its way as attendance at Mass. The Church has always linked personal asceticism and the search for holiness with this demand for mercy and justice to the poor; the Lenten trilogy of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving is both fundamental and structural. By making fasting and abstinence optional, the Church forfeited one of its most eloquent prophetic signs. There is a world of difference between a private devotional gesture, the action of the specially pious, and the prophetic witness of the whole community—the matter-of-fact witness, repeated week by week, that to be Christian is to stand among the needy.

What was striking about the instructions issued by the English bishops in abolishing compulsory Friday abstinence in 1967 was the total absence of any attempt to explain the power and meaning of the traditional observances. The American bishops did much better: while also making the matter optional, they offered a powerful and sympathetic discussion of the religious reasons for the old observance and urged American Catholics to continue the practice as a gesture of solidarity with, and gratitude for, the passion of Christ, as an act of fidelity to the Christian past, and to help "preserve a saving and necessary difference from the spirit of the world." In total contrast, the English bishops recited the problems and inconveniences surrounding abstinence. Many people, they pointed out, have their main meal at work, in a canteen; social events are often arranged for Fridays; abstinence therefore put Catholics in an awkward position. As the bishops wrote: "While an alternative dish is often available, it is questioned whether it is advisable in our mixed society for a Catholic to appear singular in this matter. Non-Catholics know and accept that we do not eat meat on Fridays, but often they do not understand why we do not, and in consequence regard us as odd."

This misses the point. The whole rationale of symbolic gestures requires that they disrupt and disturb the secular order. Their power to witness—not only to others but to ourselves—comes precisely from their awkwardness. The abolition of such observances strikes at the heart of tradition, the distinctive language of belief. Catholic value cannot be sustained without its proper symbolic expression. Spiritual needs are expressed in physical needs. People can know the fundamental neediness which is the foundation of faith only if they feel our involvement with those who fast because they have nothing to eat.

But none of those arguments prevailed, or were even explored. The bishops saw in the plight of the hungry not a reason for communal fasting as a gesture of solidarity and a call to justice and charity, but a demonstration of the emptiness of any such gesture. Many Catholics, they wrote, "have begun to ask themselves if going without meat on Friday is penance enough. Some find it no penance at all. Meanwhile in Asia, Africa, and South America many Catholics have to go without meat not only on Fridays but every day. Millions are starving or at least underfed. The bishops have therefore decided that the best way of carrying out our Lord's command to do penance is for each of us to choose our own way of self-denial every Friday."

The abandonment of fasting and abstinence was symptomatic of a more widespread leveling down and disappearance of much that was distinctive in the symbolic lives of Catholics. That drift continues. Holy days of obligation are celebrated on the nearest Sunday so as to avoid inconvenience or the interruption of secular patterns of living. Sunday Mass can be heard on a Saturday to make way for a day's work or cleaning the car or a morning in bed with the papers, like our pagan neighbors. From time to time there is talk of a fixed date for Easter and Pentecost Sunday—all part of the minimizing of symbolic distinctiveness, in the service of secular convenience, and a slow form of ritual suicide for any religious tradition.

For this aspect of tradition—the dimension of symbolic distinctiveness preserved in the ancient patterns of the worship and ritual life of the Church—is at least as central to Catholic identity as many of the doctrinal positions worried about by those who conceive of tradition primarily as a body of authoritative teaching. Indeed, the massive desensitization to the meaning and value of symbolic gesture and symbolic differentiation in the two generations since the council would not have been possible had Catholics not long since parked responsibility for all that with an abstraction called the Magisterium, thereby absolving themselves from understanding and teaching the value of their symbols and traditional practices. How else could the Catholic people have allowed their pastors to assail and abolish these ancient continuities in the name of convenience and the avoidance of oddity?

The authoritarian narrowing of the tradition to, in essence, a body of doctrines to be believed and orders from above to be obeyed, was a decisive factor in desensitizing ordinary Catholics, clerical as well as lay, to the beauty and independent value of their inherited observances—matters over which no authority has or ought to have absolute control. The ordinary members of the Orthodox and Byzantine Rite Catholic Churches have a far less authoritarian mentality than Catholics, a far more widespread and lively sense of the richness of their traditions of prayer and practice, and a far more secure sense of ownership by the people of the

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symbols which provide continuity with the Christian past and guidance to its future.

The realization that perhaps too much was carelessly abandoned in the years after the council is now widespread—it is even something of an official view in the later years of the present pontificate—and has helped fuel sometimes scary projects for a restoration of "real Catholicism," programs in which the vigorous exercise of authority from above looms very large. Such programs are at least as bad as the ills they seek to remedy. There are no quick fixes: tradition cannot be rebuilt to a neat program and by orders from Rome. Our shared past can only be excavated by shared endeavor, by a painful and constant process of reeducation and rediscovery; in that process, we start from where we are, not where we wish we had stayed. The Church cannot afford the pleasures and false securities of reaction. But that is not to say that in our march into the needs and opportunities of the twenty-first century we should not try once more to summon up some of the deeper resources of our own tradition, and try to rediscover within it once more some of the supports which helped our fathers and mothers to live the gospel. We could do worse than rededicate ourselves to the observance of fasting and abstinence.

Eamon Duffy is Professor of the History of Christianity at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of Magdalene College. This essay originally appeared in the January 31, 2004, issue of the Tablet *(www.thetablet.co.uk).*

Tsunami and Theodicy

David B. Hart

No one, no matter how great the scope of his imagination, should be able easily to absorb the immensity of the catastrophe that struck the Asian rim of the Indian Ocean and the coast of Somalia on the second day of Christmas this past year; nor would it be quite human to fail, in its wake, to feel some measure of spontaneous resentment towards God, fate, *natura naturans*, or whatever other force one imagines governs the intricate web of cosmic causality. But, once one's indignation at the callousness of the universe begins to subside, it is worth recalling that nothing that occurred that day or in the days that followed told us anything about the nature of finite existence of which we were not already entirely aware.

Not that one should be cavalier in the face of misery on so gigantic a scale, or should dismiss the spiritual perplexity it occasions. But, at least for those of us who are Christians, it is prudent to prepare ourselves as quickly and decorously as we may for the mixed choir of secular moralists whose clamor will soon—inevitably—swell about our ears, gravely informing us that here at last our faith must surely founder upon the rocks of empirical horrors too vast to be reconciled with any system of belief in a God of justice or mercy. It is of course somewhat petty to care overly much about captious atheists at such a time, but it is difficult not to be annoyed when a zealous skeptic, eager to be the first to deliver God His long overdue *coup de grâce*, begins confidently to speak as if believers have never until this moment considered the problem of evil or confronted despair or suffering or death. Perhaps we did not notice the Black Death, the Great War, the Holocaust, or every instance of famine, pestilence, flood, fire, or earthquake in the whole of the human past; perhaps every Christian who has ever had to bury a child has somehow remained insensible to the depth of his own bereavement.

For sheer fatuity, on this score, it would be difficult to surpass Martin Kettle's pompous and platitudinous reflections in the *Guardian*, appearing two days after the earthquake: certainly, he argues, the arbitrariness of the destruction visited upon so many and such diverse victims must pose an insoluble conundrum for "creationists" everywhere—although he wonders, in concluding, whether his contemporaries are "too cowed" even to ask "if the God can exist that can do such things" (as if a public avowal of unbelief required any great reserves of fortitude in modern Britain). It would have at least been courteous, one would think, if he had made more than a perfunctory effort to ascertain what religious persons actually do believe before presuming to instruct them on what they cannot believe.

In truth, though, confronted by such enormous suffering, Christians have less to fear from the piercing dialectic of the village atheist than they do from the earnestness of certain believers, and from the clouds of cloying incense wafting upward from the open thuribles of their hearts. As irksome as Kettle's argument is, it is merely insipid; more troubling are the attempts of some Christians to rationalize this catastrophe in ways that, however inadvertently, make that argument all at once seem profound. And these attempts can span almost the entire spectrum of religious sensibility: they can be cold with Stoical austerity, moist with lachrymose piety, wanly roseate with sickly metaphysical optimism.

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Mildly instructive to me were some remarks sent to Christian websites discussing a *Wall Street Journal* column of mine from the Friday following the earthquake. A stern if somewhat excitable Calvinist, intoxicated with God's sovereignty, asserted that in the—let us grant this chimera a moment's life—"Augustinian-Thomistic-Calvinist tradition," and particularly in Reformed thought, suffering and death possess "epistemic significance" insofar as they manifest divine attributes that "might not otherwise be displayed." A scholar whose work I admire contributed an eloquent expostulation invoking the Holy Innocents, praising our glorious privilege (not shared by the angels) of bearing scars like those of Christ, and advancing the venerable homiletic conceit that our salvation from sin will result in a greater good than could have evolved from an innocence untouched by death. A man manifestly intelligent and devout, but with a knack for making providence sound like karma, argued that all are guilty through original sin but some more than others, that our "sense of justice" requires us to believe that "punishments and rewards [are] distributed according to our just desserts," that God is the "balancer of accounts," and that we must suppose that the suffering of these innocents will bear "spiritual fruit for themselves and for all mankind."

All three wished to justify the ways of God to man, to affirm God's benevolence, to see meaning in the seemingly monstrous randomness of nature's violence, and to find solace in God's guiding hand. None seemed to worry that others might think him to be making a fine case for a rejection of God, or of faith in divine goodness. Simply said, there is no more liberating knowledge given us by the gospel—and none in which we should find more comfort—than the knowledge that suffering and death, considered in themselves, have no ultimate meaning at all.

The *locus classicus* of modern disenchantment with "nature's God" is probably Voltaire's *Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne*, written in response to the great earthquake that—on All Saints' Day, 1755—struck just offshore of what was then the resplendent capital of the Portuguese empire. Lisbon was home to a quarter million, at least 60,000 of whom perished, both from the initial tremor (reckoned now, like the Sumatran earthquake, at a Richter force of around 9.0) and from the tsunami that it cast up on shore half an hour later (especially murderous to those who had retreated to boats in the mouth of the river Tagus to escape the destruction on land). An enormous fire soon began to consume the ruined city. Tens of thousands were drowned along the coasts of the Algarve, southern Spain, and Morocco.

For Voltaire, a catastrophe of such indiscriminate vastness was incontrovertible evidence against the bland optimism of popular theodicy. His poem—for all the mellifluousness of its alexandrines—was a lacerating attack upon the proposition that "*tout est bien.*" Would you dare argue, he asks, that you see the necessary effect of eternal laws decreed by a God both free and just as you contemplate

> Ces femmes, ces enfants l'un sur l'autre entassés,
> Sous ces marbres rompus ces membres dispersés

"These women, these infants heaped one upon the other, these limbs scattered beneath shattered marbles"? Or would you argue that all of this is but God's just vengeance upon human iniquity?

> Quel crime, quelle faute ont commis ces enfants
> Sur le sein maternel écrasés et sanglants?

"What crime and what sin have been committed by these infants crushed and bleeding on their mothers' breasts?" Or would you comfort those dying in torment on desolate shores by assuring them that others will profit from their demise and that they are discharging the parts assigned them by universal law? Do not, says Voltaire, speak of the great chain of being, for that chain is held in the hand of a God who is Himself enchained by nothing.

For all its power, however, Voltaire's poem is a very feeble thing compared to the case for "rebellion" against "the will of God" in human suffering placed in the mouth of Ivan Karamazov by that fervently Christian novelist Dostoevsky; for, while the evils Ivan recounts to his brother Alexey are acts not of impersonal nature but of men, Dostoevsky's treatment of innocent suffering possesses a profundity of which Voltaire was never even remotely capable. Famously, Dostoevsky supplied Ivan with true accounts of children tortured and murdered: Turks tearing babies from their mothers' wombs, impaling infants on bayonets, firing pistols into their mouths; parents savagely flogging their children; a five-year-old-girl tortured by her mother and father, her mouth filled with excrement, locked at night in an outhouse, weeping her supplications to "dear kind God" in the darkness; an eight-year-old serf child torn to pieces by his master's dogs for a small accidental transgression.

But what makes Ivan's argument so disturbing is not that he accuses God of failing to save the innocent; rather, he rejects salvation itself, insofar as he understands it, and on moral grounds. He grants that one day there may be an eternal harmony established, one that we will discover somehow necessitated the

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suffering of children, and perhaps mothers will forgive the murderers of their babies, and all will praise God's justice; but Ivan wants neither harmony—"for love of man I reject it," "it is not worth the tears of that one tortured child"—nor forgiveness; and so, not denying there is a God, he simply chooses to return his ticket of entrance to God's Kingdom. After all, Ivan asks, if you could bring about a universal and final beatitude for all beings by torturing one small child to death, would you think the price acceptable?

Voltaire's poem is not a challenge to Christian faith; it inveighs against a variant of the "deist" God, one who has simply ordered the world exactly as it now is, and who balances out all its eventualities in a precise equilibrium between felicity and morality. Nowhere does it address the Christian belief in an ancient alienation from God that has wounded creation in its uttermost depths, and reduced cosmic time to a shadowy remnant of the world God intends, and enslaved creation to spiritual and terrestrial powers hostile to God. But Ivan's rebellion is something altogether different. Voltaire sees only the terrible truth that the actual history of suffering and death is not morally intelligible. Dostoevsky sees—and this bespeaks both his moral genius and his Christian view of reality—that it would be far more terrible if it were.

Christians often find it hard to adopt the spiritual idiom of the New Testament—to think in terms, that is, of a cosmic struggle between good and evil, of Christ's triumph over the principalities of this world, of the overthrow of hell. All Christians know, of course, that it is through God's self-outpouring upon the cross that we are saved, and that we are made able by grace to participate in Christ's suffering; but this should not obscure that other truth revealed at Easter: that the incarnate God enters "this cosmos" not simply to disclose its immanent rationality, but to break the boundaries of fallen nature asunder, and to refashion creation after its ancient beauty—wherein neither sin nor death had any place. Christian thought has traditionally, of necessity, defined evil as a privation of the good, possessing no essence or nature of its own, a purely parasitic corruption of reality; hence it can have no *positive* role to play in God's determination of Himself or purpose for His creatures (even if by economy God can bring good from evil); it can in no way supply any imagined deficiency in God's or creation's goodness. Being infinitely sufficient in Himself, God had no need of a passage through sin and death to manifest His glory in His creatures or to join them perfectly to Himself. This is why it is misleading (however soothing it may be) to say that the drama of fall and redemption will make the final state of things more glorious than it might otherwise have been. No less metaphysically incoherent—though immeasurably more vile—is the suggestion that God requires suffering and death to reveal certain of his attributes (capricious cruelty, perhaps? morbid indifference? a twisted sense of humor?). It is precisely sin, suffering, and death that blind us to God's true nature.

There is, of course, some comfort to be derived from the thought that everything that occurs at the level of what Aquinas calls secondary causality—in nature or history—is governed not only by a transcendent providence, but by a universal teleology that makes every instance of pain and loss an indispensable moment in a grand scheme whose ultimate synthesis will justify all things. But consider the price at which that comfort is purchased: it requires us to believe in and love a God whose good ends will be realized not only in spite of—but entirely by way of—every cruelty, every fortuitous misery, every catastrophe, every betrayal, every sin the world has ever known; it requires us to believe in the eternal spiritual necessity of a child dying an agonizing death from diphtheria, of a young mother ravaged by cancer, of tens of thousands of Asians swallowed in an instant by the sea, of millions murdered in death camps and gulags and forced famines. It seems a strange thing to find peace in a universe rendered morally intelligible at the cost of a God rendered morally loathsome. Better, it seems to me, the view of the ancient Gnostics: however ludicrous their beliefs, they at least, when they concluded that suffering and death were essential aspects of the creator's design, had the good sense to yearn to know a higher God.

I do not believe we Christians are obliged—or even allowed—to look upon the devastation visited upon the coasts of the Indian Ocean and to console ourselves with vacuous cant about the mysterious course taken by God's goodness in this world, or to assure others that some ultimate meaning or purpose resides in so much misery. Ours is, after all, a religion of salvation; our faith is in a God who has come to rescue His creation from the absurdity of sin and the emptiness of death, and so we are permitted to hate these things with a perfect hatred. For while Christ takes the suffering of his creatures up into his own, it is not because he or they had need of suffering, but because he would not abandon his creatures to the grave. And while we know that the victory over evil and death has been won, we know also that it is a victory yet to come, and that creation therefore, as Paul says, groans in expectation of the glory that will one day be revealed. Until then, the world remains a place

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of struggle between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, life and death; and, in such a world, our portion is charity.

As for comfort, when we seek it, I can imagine none greater than the happy knowledge that when I see the death of a child I do not see the face of God, but the face of His enemy. It is not a faith that would necessarily satisfy Ivan Karamazov, but neither is it one that his arguments can defeat: for it has set us free from optimism, and taught us hope instead. We can rejoice that we are saved not through the immanent mechanisms of history and nature, but by grace; that God will not unite all of history's many strands in one great synthesis, but will judge much of history false and damnable; that He will not simply reveal the sublime logic of fallen nature, but will strike off the fetters in which creation languishes; and that, rather than showing us how the tears of a small girl suffering in the dark were necessary for the building of the Kingdom, He will instead raise her up and wipe away all tears from her eyes—and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain, for the former things will have passed away, and He that sits upon the throne will say, "Behold, I make all things new."

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Lift Me, Lord

Lift me, Lord, for I fall and nothing stays me,
loveless and heedless, without faith or fear.
I long to rise but lie unmoving here:
the very self that wishes disobeys me.

Though one, my self divides and then betrays me:
at once both dead, alive; sad, full of cheer;
not able—though I can—to persevere,
I flee the sin that tangles and delays me.

So obstinate am I, so steeled in will,
that fear of being lost and fear to lose you
have never yet dissuaded me from ill.

Work, then, your power and mercy so I choose you,
since I know some who mend each day—and still
find in myself but fresh desire to bruise you.

Fray Miguel de Guevara, c. 1585-1646
Translated from the Spanish
by Rhina P. Espaillat

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What's Right with Kansas

James Nuechterlein

The outcome of last November's election was a long time in the making. It is clear, in the easy wisdom of hindsight, that the Democratic Party's descent into its present minority status began more than thirty-five years ago. Starting with Richard Nixon's narrow capture of the White House in 1968, Republicans have won seven of ten presidential elections. (They had lost seven of the previous nine.) More significantly in terms of party standing, their marginal pickups in the House and Senate that year presaged their eventual emergence by the 1990s as the majority party in Congress. For those of us who grew up in a political America in which Democrats dominated Congress as a matter of course, it is stunning to note that Democrats are today numerically weaker in the House than they have been since the days of Harry Truman and in the Senate since before the Great Depression.

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH KANSAS? HOW CONSERVATIVES WON THE HEART OF AMERICA

By Thomas Frank
Metropolitan
306 pp. $24.

I cannot claim that I foresaw all this at the time. But there was a small moment that struck me then and that in retrospect grows in significance. It was a few days before the 1968 election, and the polls showed Hubert Humphrey trailing Nixon. Humphrey gave the kind of finishing speech that all Democratic candidates, especially those in trouble, had been giving since the days of Franklin Roosevelt: vote for the Republicans and you're back to unemployment, bread lines, and general economic disaster. In its familiarity, the speech hardly registered with me. But the next morning I ran into a student at the university where I was teaching who was quite perplexed. He was basically of liberal persuasion, but as a child of the prosperous postwar era he was at a loss concerning Humphrey's argument. "What was that stuff about Herbert Hoover all about?" he wondered.

That was for me a revelatory moment. For young people, at least, the Depression no longer mattered, and this had obvious implications for the long-term development of American politics. If memories of the 1930s would no longer determine political outcomes, what would? What we today call cultural issues were not so much at the forefront of political sensibility as they would later be, but Nixon strongly benefited from his "law and order" appeal. Liberals called it a code term for racism, but most Americans, appalled by urban riots and burgeoning crime rates, took it at face value and responded accordingly. That was a foretaste of politics to come. Indeed, foreign-policy issues for the moment aside, it is not too much to say that the Democrats' current electoral dilemma boils down to this: their old economic issues no longer work, and on cultural issues they lose. That very large generalization requires extensive unpacking and elaboration.

We might begin by recasting policy differences in a more general context. It is commonly noted that in any argument the side that determines the terms of debate is already well on the road to victory. And the fact is that on all the big questions Republicans currently have the initiative and Democrats must do the best they can playing defense. For most of the middle to early-late years of the twentieth century, matters were reversed. On economic issues, the Republicans were the "me

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too" party: they would, in the aftermath of the New Deal, do all the good things the Democrats did, only more efficiently and less intrusively. Now, after Ronald Reagan rewrote the rules of political debate, it's backwards: the Democrats find themselves promising to follow Republican market initiatives, only with more heart and less human cost. Liberals don't like it, but they have learned to agree, rhetorically at least, with Bill Clinton's famous declaration that "the era of big government is over."

So also with cultural issues. The degree to which moral and cultural differences determined last November's results is hotly debated, but everyone agrees that to the extent that they did matter, they overwhelmingly helped the Republicans. Liberals find it necessary to deny recurring suspicions that they are antinomians, moral relativists, and secularists set on removing religious values from the public square. Their discomfort with cultural issues is reflected in their protests that matters such as partial-birth abortion, school prayer, or same-sex marriage are not proper items for political debate; they are rather "wedge issues" that conservatives illegitimately bring into the public arena in order to divide the nation (read: in order to cost Democrats votes). A party whose response to a whole category of issues is to say, in effect, "we'd rather not talk about it," is a party that has allowed the opposition to frame the terms of discussion.

The Democrats' current political dilemma has hardly gone unnoticed. One influential, if controversial, take on it, Thomas Frank's *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*, gained a lot of attention before the election, and its thesis has been widely referred to (if not always with proper attribution) since. As his subtitle indicates, Frank believes that what's the matter with Kansas is what's the matter with America. And what's the matter with America (at least on domestic issues; he does not discuss foreign policy) is almost everything.

Frank's thesis is that all across the nation—especially in the so-called red states—millions of impoverished or relatively impoverished Americans are voting and acting contrary to their genuine interests. They are unhappy with developments in America, but rather than direct their anger against the corporate economic powers that are doing them dirt, they have instead been diverted to conservative cultural issues—race, crime, moral decay, homosexuality, guns, abortion, feminism, anti-Americanism, and on into infinity—that are largely irrelevant to their lives. Worse, in allying themselves with conservative interests, people at and near the bottom wind up supporting economic causes—privatization, low taxes, deregulation—that objectively do them harm.

No one can say that in presenting his endlessly repeated thesis, Frank is guilty of excessive subtlety. American politics, in his view, has gone beyond the irrational to the demented: "People getting their fundamental interests wrong is what American political life is all about. This species of derangement is the bedrock of our civic order; it is the foundation on which all else rests."

Out of this "derangement," Frank says, has come a "Great Backlash," a movement of self-deluded conservative populism that in the end "may well repeal the entire twentieth century." Frank offers a description of his home state and its politics that, applied to the nation, is apparently meant to terrify us all.

> In its implacable bitterness Kansas holds up a mirror to the rest of us. If this is the place where America goes looking for its national soul, then this is where America finds that its soul, after stewing in the primal resentment of the backlash, has gone all sour and wrong. If Kansas is the concentrated essence of normality, then here is where we can see the deranged gradually become normal, where we look into that handsome, confident, reassuring, all-American face . . . and realize that we are staring into the eyes of a lunatic.

Lurking behind this politics of insanity, in Frank's view, are the coldly rational forces of corporate capitalism. The capitalists aren't crazy, just malign. Capitalism itself, Frank says, is "borderline criminality." It is also an entirely zero-sum operation in which the unjustified wealth of the few comes at the expense of the many. In Kansas—and so elsewhere across the country—the depredations of the system are such that the cities are in irretrievable trouble and the towns and rural areas "pretty much in free fall." When the author is in full rhetorical overdrive, his readers might suppose that things haven't changed all that much since John Steinbeck wrote *The Grapes of Wrath*. (Frank does not burden his argument with empirical data. His evidence for his sweeping economic generalizations ranges from the impressionistic to the nonexistent. In fact, a number of critics have charged that his economic analysis of Kansas is flat wrong.) The author's view of capitalism and its effects, all in all, is about as nuanced as the village atheist's view of Christianity.

Politics in America, in Frank's analysis, used to be—and still ought to be—the way the Populists of the 1890s and progressive interests up into the 1960s imagined it: the liberal masses—workers, farmers, and all but the cream of the middle class—arrayed against the

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conservative economic elites. But now, Frank complains, things have been turned upside down. Conservative analysts have successfully sold a conspiratorial version of politics founded on "the systematic erasure of the economic." In this view, existing economic arrangements—those of the minimally regulated free market—are not to be debated but simply accepted as the givens they presumably are, established by nature and sanctified by providence. (An earlier book by Frank bore the title *One Market Under God.*)

With economics eliminated, Frank argues, politics becomes a struggle over culture, and elites and masses are redefined accordingly. In peddling their bogus worldview, the conservatives claim that a New Class of liberal cultural aristocrats—concentrated in the universities, the mainstream media, the entertainment world, and political and judicial bureaucracies—exercises intellectual hegemony over the masses of ordinary Americans who have watched, bewildered and dismayed, as their conservative moral values have been systematically ridiculed and traduced. John Dos Passos famously wrote of America as "two nations" of rich vs. poor; in the new version those two nations are made up of blue-state modernists vs. red-state traditionalists.

For Frank, the idea of "New Class" cultural domination fails on several counts. The notion of a liberal elite commanding the intellectual heights is false in itself (a proposition he apparently thinks so self-evident as to require no serious argument in its support). In any case, the emphasis on culture obscures the continuing essential reality of business domination over American life. The politics of culture is a politics where class animus has been led wildly astray.

Even in those rare instances where the cultural argument holds a modicum of validity, it cannot be separated from the corruptions of corporate America. Yes, Frank concedes, there is a good deal of vulgarity in our popular culture, but that is the product of an unholy alliance, securely rooted in the pursuit of profit, between the business culture and the counterculture. In general, the cynical leaders of the backlash—as distinguished from the true believers at the grass roots who really do care about issues like abortion, religion, homosexual marriage, and the rest—are often moderate cultural modernists themselves, but they are perfectly happy to reap the benefits that accrue to them from red-state Americans losing sight of the material issues that ought to dominate their political imaginations.

Backlash leaders are in fact doubly cynical. They can, in Frank's telling, indulge the cultural fantasies of conservatives because they know in practice they will never have to deliver on the promises of change they make. Fighters of the culture wars always lose. ("Abortion is never halted. Affirmative action is never abolished. The culture industry is never forced to clean up its act.") Once the elections are over, manipulators of the backlash bury the cultural issues while exploiting the economic rewards their conservative victories have generated. As Frank inelegantly puts it, "The leaders of the backlash may talk Christ, but they walk corporate."

But if it is cynics and opportunists on the right who are mostly accountable for the "landscape of distortion [and] paranoia" that is backlash country in America, Frank does not spare presumed liberals in his account of what has gone wrong. Indeed, he devotes most of his last chapter to an indictment of Democratic policies in the 1990s (the Democratic Leadership Council's studied moderation; Bill Clinton's "triangulation" between the Democratic left and Republican right) for the catastrophic derailment of populism from economics to culture.

In their seemingly clever device of moving to the center—which meant in practice disavowing a fundamental critique of American capitalism's deficiencies—the Clintonite Democrats were guilty of the "purest folly." Their "criminally stupid strategy" of removing central economic distinctions from the table has made them easy prey for their enemies: "[B]y dropping the class language that once distinguished them sharply from Republicans they have left themselves vulnerable to cultural wedge issues like guns and abortion and the rest whose hallucinatory appeal would ordinarily be far overshadowed by material concerns."

Frank's prescription for liberal Democratic revival follows from his analysis. The Democrats must repudiate their decision to reconstitute themselves as "the *other* pro-business party" and become again the "party of Roosevelt," taking up the class issues and rhetoric that FDR wielded to forge a long-term political majority. A return to class-based economic conflict is the necessary alternative to a politics of culture in which liberals will perpetually wind up as losers.

The Democrats' present failure stems from their presumption that on economic issues they win by default, that non-wealthy voters know their own material interests—those historically opposed or left unaddressed by Republicans—and do not require instruction or reminding as to which party is on their side. In this view, liberals need not risk alienating affluent moderates by employing class-war language to attract those whose votes they already have.

Against this strategy Frank argues (oddly, one would think, for a self-proclaimed populist) that people don't necessarily know their own interests. The folk, it turns out, are, and have been for some time, rather easily gulled. They need to be taught to recog-

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nize their true concerns. And in this Democrats have failed. They must now reintroduce the masses (Frank is vague as to what specific categories of Americans he is addressing) to the realities of class division in the nation and must mobilize them accordingly.

Democrats have to relearn, Frank says, the lessons of organization and movement-building that marked liberalism's long-term development towards fulfillment in the New Deal. Politics is based in solidarity. Frank notes specifically the effect of union membership on voting behavior. With other demographic variables held constant, being a member of a union makes a person more likely to vote Democratic. Union voters, he argues, keep their eyes on economic interests and are less likely than their nonunion counterparts to get caught up in cultural backlash issues. Union membership, of course, has declined significantly over the past half century, from 35 percent of the workforce in the 1950s to 12.9 percent today. Frank appears to attribute that decline mainly to the "union-busting" activities of the right, but he also notes that it has gone "largely unchecked by a Democratic Party anxious to demonstrate its fealty to corporate America."

That concluding cheap shot at moderate Democrats is typical of Frank's approach. The concept of sincere error is largely foreign to him. Contemporary conservatives and liberals alike are not just mistaken in their understanding of politics; they are for the most part venal sellouts for whom hypocrisy and mendacity are second nature.

Not so, to be sure, with the deluded folk. Their problem is not venality but, well, a certain form of stupidity. They are apparently just too dumb not to be taken in by the "hallucinatory appeal" of backlash cultural issues. Frank, one assumes, would quarrel with this way of putting his argument, but he offers no alternative explanation for how millions of middle Americans are so blind to their real interests and so self-destructive in their political behavior. The backlash, in his own words, "is a working-class movement that has done incalculable, historic harm to working-class people." Or consider the typically ripe rhetorical flourish with which he concludes his book: "Kansas is ready to lead us singing into the apocalypse. It invites us all to join in, to lay down our lives so that others might cash out at the top; to renounce forever our middle-American prosperity in pursuit of a crimson fantasy of middle-American righteousness."

Frank is led to this bizarre binary view of contemporary American politics—people are either knaves or fools—by his insistent (if entirely unexamined) assumption that the only rational politics is a material politics. Voters who place cultural or moral concerns above economic self-interest are obviously beset by a form of false consciousness (Frank never uses the term, but his analysis presupposes it).

One wonders, however, if he fully subscribes to the vulgar leftism his argument suggests. What does he make, for example, of all those wealthy liberals who voted for John Kerry and who contributed generously to his campaign even though Kerry made clear that he would repeal the tax cuts that George W. Bush pushed through in their favor? Were they, too, guilty of political irrationality? Such rhetorical questions answer themselves. When American Jews—the wealthiest ethnic group in the nation—voted overwhelmingly last November, as they regularly do, for the Democratic candidate, they were not voting in ignorance of their own interests. They were voting for what they saw as a particular Jewish concern—social justice—that rightly trumps economic self-interest. One might argue with their angle of vision, as a number of my conservative Jewish friends do, but no one would label it, as Frank describes the Republican votes of the less well-off, a "species of derangement."

It is fair enough to question the true significance to the lives of ordinary Americans of some items in Frank's litany of backlash issues. But consider the three that regularly come to the fore: the role of religion in public life, gay marriage, and abortion. It is not irrational or irrelevant to consider the elimination of public acknowledgment of religion a likely contribution to the loss of moral seriousness in our civic life. It is not irrational or irrelevant to view with grave concern a redefinition of marriage that would overturn the practice of millennia. And it is certainly not irrational or irrelevant to insist on that most basic of civilizational requirements: the protection of innocent human life.

Frank's economic analysis is similarly subject to fundamental question. He expatiates at some length on the need for Democrats to take up FDR's successful class-based politics without once finding it necessary to refer to the Great Depression, an event without which that politics would have been entirely quixotic, indeed quite unimaginable. Frank's is a politics without context. Recollection of Roosevelt's attacks on the "economic royalists" may provoke nostalgia on the left for the heroic struggles of yore, but employed in today's very different economic situation such attacks would meet among most Americans blank incomprehension.

All this may seem indulgence in analytical overkill. Thomas Frank kindles enthusiasm in the most leftward ranks of Democrats, but he hardly represents the party's vital center. He is to liberalism, one might say, what someone like Ann Coulter (a figure he regularly invokes) is to conservatism.

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Yet he cannot simply be dismissed. The positions he takes are extremely put, but many Democrats assent to his essential view that the culture wars represent a distraction from political reality and pose a threat not simply to their party's interests but to the political health of the nation. Few liberals would go as far as he in his denunciations of capitalism—what other game, after all, is there in town?—but they resonate to his criticism of the greed and excessive influence in politics of corporate interests. To put matters fancifully, their ids are with Frank even when their egos tell them otherwise.

From the fanciful to the immediate: Why did the Democrats lose in 2004 and what can they do to turn things around? On the latter point, perhaps the most telling comment is that attributed to former Congresswoman Pat Schroeder in response to the string of Republican presidential victories in the 1980s: "There are three things Democrats must do to recapture the White House. Unfortunately, we don't know what any of them are."

As to what happened in November, it appears that the prevailing opinion is that John Kerry lost what should have been a winnable race. If only, one hears over and over from Democrats, he had articulated a stronger, clearer, more compelling message, then things would have turned out differently. That view seems to me to underestimate the party's problems. To begin with, the Democrats have become the minority party not just in presidential terms but at virtually every level of electoral competition, federal, state, and local. Whatever Kerry's inadequacies (and what alternative candidate, one wonders, would have performed better?), he can hardly be blamed for so encompassing a political rejection—one, moreover, that has been building for a very long time.

Kerry did, to be sure, have a message problem, but that problem was and is not just his, but his whole party's. To sum up in a phrase: the Democrats are a center-left party in a center-right nation. They stumble over their message because if they clearly say what they most deeply believe it gets them in political trouble. Consider the contrast with their opponents. Republicans are conservatives who are proud to say so and who do not fear that saying so will hurt them. Democrats are liberals who, in a correct analysis of their political situation, assiduously avoid using the word that most commonly describes them. Their label discomfits them and their positions give them an edgy relation with the majority of voters.

Take, to begin with, their views (necessarily presented here only in outline form) on a subject we have not previously considered: foreign and military policy. Kerry tripped all over himself in this area during the campaign, but he did so mainly because of the internal exigencies of Democratic politics. He faced the near-impossible task of mobilizing the intense antiwar sentiments of much of his party without reinforcing the general perception that Democrats are insufficiently hawkish. Democrats, it is widely thought, are instinctive doves who are entirely comfortable only with those exercises of American power (as in Kosovo) where humanitarian impulses, rather than defense of the national interest, are the primary imperative.

To counter that impression, Kerry talked tough on terrorism and moderated his opposition to the war in Iraq by insisting that, however wrong we were to go there, we would now have to stay the course. That fully satisfied neither hawks nor doves. Neither did the candidate's recurring insistence that he would, without reservation, act on what is right for America and yet at the same time restore to the center of American policy maintenance of close relations with presumed allies—France, Germany, and Russia—whose desire to cooperate with American interests is less than obvious. There was a coherent argument to be made that opposition to the war in Iraq is not inconsistent with a vigorous defense of American interests, but the Democrats' uncertain history on national security since Vietnam hurt their credibility. (Kerry's record on national security as a Senator and his overheated testimony on Vietnam to a Senate committee as a young veteran were emblematic here.)

On the economic issues we have already glanced at, the Democratic situation is more ambiguous. Frank suggests—and he is far from alone in this—that the party's success depends on reaffirming its traditional identity as the agent of "equality and economic security." He and those who agree with him are half right, or almost so. Economic security is indeed important to Americans and they tend to prefer Democrats on the issue, as polling results on items such as health care and social security regularly confirm.

Yet, in one of the not infrequent contradictions of American politics, voters combine their concern for economic security—and their reliance on the state to guarantee it—with an intense generalized distrust of, and opposition to, big government. Lyndon Johnson's overly ambitious Great Society program, especially its failed War on Poverty, did much to diminish the faith in government that FDR's New Deal had generated. That faith has never fully been revived.

As for economic equality, that is an issue that appears to generate more concern among the party's liberal intellectual elite than among its rank-and-file. The historical record is consistent: ordinary Americans insist on equality of opportunity; they are, at most, indifferent to equality of result. They harbor sporadic populist

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resentments against the rich (and so respond favorably to moderate doses of business-bashing), but they want less to level the orders above them than to join them. As the absence—unparalleled in the Western experience—of a significant socialist party indicates, Americans care about economic growth, not redistribution. Democrats can win when they focus on ensuring prosperity for all, but not when they emphasize by how much the poor trail the wealthy.

It is cultural issues that most divide the nation—and that most put Democrats at a disadvantage. Americans can (more or less) find common ground on economics and foreign policy, but, on cultural matters, they are radically at odds with one another. The differences in their realms of moral understanding go so deep as to make communication difficult. Their mutual incomprehension produces stereotypes of the other that range from the oversimplified to the truly vicious.

At its deepest level, this is a war of religion. Secularists vote heavily Democratic; those most regular in their religious observance vote disproportionately Republican. But that, as liberals point out, distorts the issue. Most secularists are Democrats, but most Democrats are not secularists. America is a religious nation, and our differences are not so much of religion vs. irreligion as they are of divergent understandings of what our religious commitments require of us politically. That is a complicated matter that defies easy summary, but it is a serviceable generalization that here, as in the culture at large, we pit liberal, mostly Democratic, modernists against conservative, mostly Republican, traditionalists.

These religious and moral differences play out in critical political controversies. Everyone agrees that Supreme Court appointments will be the most controverted issue of President Bush's second term. That is because those appointments may well determine the outcome of everything from abortion to affirmative action to gay rights to religion in public life. (Experts on both sides present sophisticated jurisprudential arguments in defense of their positions, but most people look more to congenial outcomes than to consistent principles of law.)

These are the issues that try Democrats' souls. In each case (abortion most complicatedly) their instincts lead them to the politically unpopular position. Artful finessing by artful candidates can go only so far: Democrats must sooner or later choose between principle and prudence. As with the culture, so, if less obviously, with politics in general. Today liberalism is not, as it was for so long, America's default political position, and that transformation—effected so gradually that many people have missed it—means that Democrats are no longer the nation's natural political majority.

We can perhaps understand most clearly what has happened by focusing not on the demographic data that map the Democrats' decline but on the struggle over ideas that illuminates the Republicans' ascendancy. The GOP has gained the political initiative by managing to identify itself as what one might call the party of American exceptionalism.

Republicans are by and large (all that follows is "by and large" and admittedly oversimplified) unselfconsciously patriotic. They assume without question that America is a force for good in the world, and it does not much bother them that the "international community" (including certain putative allies) often thinks otherwise. They don't want out of the United Nations, but neither do they take it very seriously. Pursuit of the national interest seems to them a self-evident imperative of foreign policy. They favor a strong defense, and although they prefer that military conflict be avoided, they are not, on principle, antiwar. And when war does become necessary, they think it should be fought vigorously and that it should end in overwhelming victory. They are nervous about the idea of empire and do not think the United States is one. About wars of choice (including Iraq and, earlier, Vietnam) they are uneasy but tend, once war begins, to rally round the flag.

In economic matters, Republicans assume all of the following. People should take primary responsibility for their own well-being. In making it or not, it is individuals who most matter, not the system. Individualism is a good thing and the ambition for improvement of one's condition that follows from it is to be encouraged. Competition contributes to human flourishing. Dependence on welfare is never good in theory but is sometimes required, if only for brief periods, in practice. In the trade-off between freedom and equality, freedom has priority. The free market is the norm, though occasionally it needs modest regulation. Provision for economic security is a necessary function of modern government, but it is not government's chief end and should be kept within careful limits. In general, the nanny state cannot be done away with but must always be regarded with suspicion.

In moral/cultural/religious affairs, Republicans are unapologetically conventional. They want God in public life and are pleased, rather than embarrassed, when politicians end their speeches with "God bless America." They are mostly Christians and the churches they attend are unlikely to substitute the social gospel for orthodox Christianity. The use of racial

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preferences, white or black, seems to them a denial of the American Dream of equal opportunity without regard to irrelevant personal characteristics. Most of them view abortion the way Lincoln viewed slavery: it should be severely restricted on the way (extreme cases aside) to its ultimate extinction. They are instinctively opposed to same-sex marriage though they don't like talking about it and are not good at articulating their arguments against it. They are worried about moral decline, but are at the same time optimistic about the nation's future—which makes them odd conservatives but prototypical Americans.

If their identification with American exceptionalism—whatever one thinks of the merits of the position—has worked to the Republicans' benefit, where does that leave Democrats? In trouble, one would think, but not irretrievably so. To begin with, more Americans than ever go to college, and college students are taught by their overwhelmingly liberal professors to consider American exceptionalism a provincial embarrassment. That may, over time, catch up with Republicans.

More broadly, the center-left/center-right electoral division that currently works to the Democrats' disadvantage is a relatively narrow one that leaves most particular elections up for grabs. Americans are more ideological than they used to be, but most of them are not so much in the grip of ideology as to be unbudgeable in their political preferences. Particular candidates and issues make a big difference. Republicans should be relieved, for example, that the Twenty-Second Amendment prevents Bill Clinton from running for president again, and it is always possible that Republicans currently in power will fall victim to hubris, incompetence, or simple bad luck. Finally, the drift to the right of American politics since the late 1960s is not an irreversible law of history.

Still, as things now stand, Democrats go into national elections, and the majority of elections elsewhere, as presumptive underdogs. For that to change, they might well have recourse to Thomas Frank—not as a source of political wisdom but as a near-infallible source of error. His fundamental thesis turns out to be wrong: America's poor and relatively poor are not in fact voting, whether rationally or irrationally, for Republicans. According to exit polls from last November, a majority of those whose incomes are less than fifty thousand dollars per year preferred Kerry to Bush. It seems that Frank wasted a book explaining something that needs no explaining because it is not true. It's not that the poor don't vote for Democrats—it's that there aren't enough poor to allow Democrats to win.

Democrats go wrong not because they have forgotten the lessons of FDR and the New Deal, but because they have not sufficiently put those lessons behind them. Ours is the least class-ridden society in the Western world. The political economy of the 1930s is not America's historical paradigm; it is its great exception. Democrats, of course, are not entirely ignorant of that. They now address themselves to middle-class interests, but their middle class is still a working class that simply has a few more dollars in its pocket. They have not fully learned the lesson of exceptionalism: that America is the quintessential bourgeois society. We are, for better and worse, middle class and middlebrow right down to our bones. And their failure to see that is what's the matter with the Democrats. FT

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Psychology in Recovery

Paul C. Vitz

Modern psychology, like Caesar's Gaul, has classically been divided into three parts: there is experimental psychology, test-and-measurement psychology, and therapeutic psychology. All three branches have been in steady operation since the late nineteenth century, and in all three of them one may observe, over that time, striking transformations that I think bode well for the future. As some readers may know, I was a public and rather harsh critic of much popular psychology in my first publications in the 1970s and '80s. I stand by those views. But much has changed, and changed (to my surprise) for the better. Particularly in the therapeutic discipline, and specifically in the past generation, a new and salutary understanding of what psychotherapy is and is not has been developed. It is to these advances in psychotherapy that I will pay closest attention below. But I will begin by sketching the changes in psychology's other two branches.

Experimental psychology. This branch of psychology began in the mid–nineteenth century and had a strongly physical emphasis, studying sensation, perception, and behavior; it originally included animal experimentation and has come increasingly to focus on brain function. By the late 1960s the term "experimental psychology" was falling out of use and the field was dividing into two distinct pursuits: cognitive psychology and physiological psychology. In the past thirty years or so, these two fields have again transformed themselves, with physiological psychology turning decisively back to its biological origins and becoming what is now called neuroscience. Meanwhile, cognitive psychology (with its focus on human memory, schematizing, learning, problem-solving, sensation, perception, and the like) has been going through a similar metamorphosis, giving rise to such fields as cognitive neuroscience (focusing on brain activity) and cognitive science (focusing on artificial intelligence and robotics).

It is important to emphasize that the current progeny of what was originally called experimental psychology have become accepted members of the community of the "hard sciences." The new subdisciplines of neuroscience and cognitive science retain in their names no reference to "psychology," and their practitioners display waning interest in what is still generally understood as psychology. This seems to me to be not a movement away from experimental psychology's origins, but rather a proper development from the discipline's true roots in biological and physical science.

Tests and measurements. This branch is perhaps the least glamorous of the three, but it has a creditable pedigree and has proved its usefulness. Tests and measurements began in the early twentieth century. It focused first on measuring intelligence but soon expanded into other testing areas, such as occupational aptitudes. Techniques developed in this branch help us to identify different mental pathologies: for example, the MMPI-2 measures depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and personality characteristics; and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual allows psychologists to assign to each client a diagnostic category of mental disorder. (The DSM, despite many biases and other difficulties, has proven to be extremely useful as a standard reference.) Also developed in this field are useful measurements of general well-being related to such social variables as marital status, family structure, drug use, social class, and so forth.

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The kind of social science being done in the test-and-measurement field is extremely informative, and I fully expect this discipline (despite the imperfection of some of its tools) to continue to make contributions to psychology as a whole. Again, as we saw above with experimental psychology, the internal logic of this field's development may tend to push it away from understanding itself as a branch of psychology, and in the future its practitioners may become part of a general social science measurement program, or possibly part of the field of statistics.

Psychotherapy. This third branch of psychology, focusing on mental health and the human personality, is what is meant by the term "psychology" in common parlance. Most people would associate it, quite correctly, with Sigmund Freud. In the 1890s Freud founded what we know as the psychotherapeutic world, in which the practitioner (whatever his underlying theory may be) focuses on the experience taking place during, and examined in, the therapeutic session. Freud was followed by figures such as Alfred Adler, with his interest in inferiority complexes, the ego, and social interaction, and Carl Jung, with his concern with unconscious archetypes and self-realization. Neo-Freudians in the 1940s and '50s also emphasized the ego, but introduced many other elements: of particular importance to them was a patient's early relationship with the mother-figure.

Today, psychotherapy is a large, complex enterprise, with many diverse approaches and forms of therapy, and most contemporary psychotherapists are trained in a very eclectic fashion. It is worthy of note, however, that one thing no longer included in this eclectic curriculum is much Freudian psychotherapy, which has almost entirely disappeared from American graduate programs. There are many reasons for the decline of Freudian theory in the profession, but the one on which I want to focus here is the profession's improved understanding of itself and its capabilities. Freud claimed that his work was scientific, that psychotherapy was a hard science in its infancy, and that as time went on new research would increasingly validate it. Other early psychologists such as Jung and Adler also apparently believed that their understandings would develop into a genuine natural science. Today it is clear that this scientific concept of psychotherapy is untenable.

As we have seen, the other two branches of modern psychology have correctly grasped their founding inspirations and have gone on to achieve genuinely scientific status. Psychotherapy in the past generation has similarly grasped that its founding inspiration is humanistic, and that its founders made a serious category mistake in declaring it to be a science. The nineteenth century was the heyday of moral and intellectual confidence in science, and it is easy to see why early psychologists might have prematurely applied current concepts of natural science to psychological phenomena. Freud's use of the energy model of the human mind is a clear example of borrowing from the physics of his century. The same is true of the hydraulic and equilibrium notions drawn from other sciences. Beginning in the 1960s and '70s, the computer model of the mind was used as a general metaphor—one that has been found to be quite limiting. More recently, ideas from evolutionary biology have been borrowed in order to explain human psychology. In all of these instances, the borrowed models of the mind have had some modest usefulness as loose metaphors.

In a few cases, of course, psychologists took their models from the humanities. Freud's Oedipus Complex was an early example of using a literary and narrative mode to explain personality. Carl Jung's archetypes were drawn from the humanities and often expressed an explicit mythological or narrative character. The crucial thing to note is that these uses of literature and religion and myth were as much borrowings as were appeals to concepts derived from science. Psychology on its own has never come up with its own discipline-generated basic theory. The frank admission of its inability to do so is certainly an important step on the road to recovering a proper understanding of psychology's capabilities and limitations.

Psychologists in the therapy world today have recognized that their understanding of the human person has not become more scientific. Furthermore, they no longer believe that to label their discipline a science is either possible in practice or desirable in theory. Instead, psychologists have grasped that psychotherapy best understands itself and best serves its clients by locating itself in the humanities and making use of concepts and approaches traditionally found there. For example, recent theorists such as Roy Shafer, Donald Spence, Jerome Bruner, and Dan McAdams have emphasized a narrative understanding of personality, as well as storytelling aspects of knowledge in general and of the therapeutic session in particular. Others have placed psychology in the broad field of hermeneutics, in which it becomes part of interpretive frameworks more closely related to theology, philosophy, and ethics than to traditional science. The result is that psychotherapy has begun to return to its roots in the premodern era, when psychology was understood to be a subdiscipline of philosophy.

There is still a certain amount of genuinely scientific observation and a modest proportion of important experimental research present in today's field of psy-

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chotherapy—for example, research that shows some of the early experiences that contribute to mental pathologies. In the future we are likely to see major contributions from research on experiences that build strength of character and virtue (about which I say more below). But once psychology leaves its modest scientific and objective base, it begins to use concepts and broad interpretive frameworks that are intrinsically nonscientific—and, indeed, philosophical in nature. The result is that psychology is becoming an applied philosophy of life.

Substantial evidence of this new understanding in contemporary psychotherapy is supplied by a major new development known as "positive psychology." It is clear that various psychologists anticipated this recent development, in particular Alfred Adler and Abraham Maslow (with his "third way" psychology and its positive emphases). Adler and Maslow, however, were primarily theorists. It has been the role of Martin Seligman, a former president of the American Psychological Association and a professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, to act as a catalyst for positive psychology and to promote its development as a research-based field in academic psychology.

In order to understand positive psychology, we must first provide a short description of its opposite—negative psychology. For Seligman, and now many others, negative psychology refers to the psychology of the last hundred years, begun by Freud. Such psychology focused on traumas and pathologies. It is natural enough, according to Seligman, that psychology would first focus on illness. Seligman himself, in his early career, made a contribution to this negative psychology: he is famous for identifying learned helplessness in animals and in humans as an important source of depression. But it has become clear to him and others that after a hundred years of trying to understand human problems it is time to study human strengths or positive characteristics. In addition, for many psychologists it is clear that in the relatively standard therapeutic session there is not much more to learn.

The almost exclusive emphasis on negative psychology has had undesirable consequences as well. For one thing, it has contributed to the widespread victim mentality characteristic of today's American society. Psychotherapy has been one of the most influential of the modern disciplines: directly or indirectly, it has changed the way most of us think about ourselves. The general perspective provided by negative psychology is that we are all victims of past traumas, abuse, and neglect caused by other people. This victim mentality has been widely noted and criticized, quite legitimately, as having become extreme. Many of us can see ourselves as victims—that is, as sinned against—but fewer of us recognize ourselves as victimizers: as sinners. In many ways this victim mentality is a consequence of the very structure of traditional psychotherapy, which can only identify *your* hurts and problems and their possible sources. Therapists report that it is uncommon for anyone to present to the therapist a problem that he or she has caused for another.

A further disturbing consequence of this mentality is the widespread belief that we are not responsible for our bad actions, since they are caused by what others have done to us. Obviously, in many instances, even criminal cases, there are extenuating circumstances, but I think that most thoughtful Americans believe that we have gone too far in providing people with excuses.

It is not that Seligman or most psychologists believe that negative psychology is wrong or useless. The problem is that it is quite one-sided. What is needed to balance our understanding of the person is a recognition of positive human characteristics that can both heal many of our pathologies and help to prevent psychological problems in one's future life. Positive psychology therefore emphasizes traits that promote happiness and well-being, as well as character strengths such as optimism, kindness, resilience, persistence, and gratitude. These positive characteristics, sometimes called "character strengths" or even "ego strengths" by psychologists, will be recognized by members of all major religions and by most philosophers as names for what used to be called "the virtues."

In their book *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*, Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman propose that psychology should "reclaim the study of character and virtue as legitimate topics of psychological inquiry and informed societal discourse. By providing ways of talking about character strengths and measuring them across the life span, this classification [of character and virtue] will start to make possible a science of human strengths that goes beyond armchair philosophy and political rhetoric. We believe that good character can be cultivated, but to do so, we need conceptual and empirical tools to craft and evaluate interventions."

Peterson and Seligman distinguish three conceptual levels: virtues, at the highest level; character strengths; and situational themes. In their view, the virtues "are the core characteristics valued by moral philosophers and religious thinkers: wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. These six broad categories of virtue emerge consistently from historical surveys. . . . We argue that these are universal,

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perhaps grounded in biology through an evolutionary process that selected for these aspects of excellence as means of solving the important tasks necessary for survival of the species. We speculate that all these virtues must be present at above-threshold values for an individual to be deemed of good character."

Character strengths are the basic components that go to make up the virtues. For example, the virtue of humanity involves the character strengths of love (e.g., valuing close relations with others), kindness (e.g., generosity and nurturance), and social intelligence (e.g., emotional intelligence and sensitivity). The authors give a set of ten quite detailed criteria for what constitutes a character strength. Situational themes are specific habits and kinds of behavior that manifest character strengths in given situations. Thus, for example, empathy in the workplace is expressed in terms of anticipating and meeting the needs of others at the behavioral level.

Peterson and Seligman list six core virtues, and it is not hard to provide the familiar Christian or Greco-Roman names for them. Their explanation of wisdom and knowledge is very close to the traditional virtue of prudence; humanity is close to charity; courage, justice, and temperance have not changed their names; and their sixth virtue, transcendence, is not far from hope and faith.

The authors survey the major religious and philosophical traditions in both the East and the West, in defending the universality of their definition of the six "high virtues." In the process, they explicitly acknowledge, among others, Aristotle and Aquinas.

In discovering positive human characteristics that need to be cultivated in order to strengthen a person and to help heal past suffering, psychology has, unknowingly, made a momentous conceptual change. The previous model for negative psychology was based entirely on the traditional scientific worldview of a deterministic past causing the present. In moving to positive psychology, the discipline has moved not only from science to philosophy, but also from the past and its effects to the future and our purposes, from mechanical determinism to teleology.

There are many reasons to believe that positive psychology is not merely a short-term fad. One simple reason is that it offers an innovative way of thinking about psychology and many new and important topics waiting to be systematically explored—and that translates into career opportunities for large numbers of young psychologists. We are seeing at major American universities the founding of—and considerable funding for—new institutes and faculty devoted to positive psychology, and the development of a large group of loosely affiliated scholars and researchers to investigate it. An even more substantive reason for the likely longevity of this new positive psychology is that it connects psychology to a large and powerful realm of thought and discourse about human nature that has been previously untouched by modern systematic theory and experimentation. Significant findings will have an immediate and major effect on child-rearing, education, and quite possibly on psychotherapy itself.

As for the future of psychology, an important aspect of the discipline's transformation over the past generation has been the change in psychology's view of religion. Once considered a negative or immature or pathological phenomenon, religion is no longer scorned, and many psychologists even view it in a positive light. This has happened in part because research has demonstrated that seriously religious people tend to be happier, healthier, and longer-lived. In addition, the popularity of "new age" spirituality in the lives of the governing class has at least made spiritual values something to be taken seriously. It is no longer a given that members of our educated elite will be cultured despisers of spirituality or will sneer at the religious impulse. (Of course, negative attitudes toward traditional, organized religion remain.)

The discipline of psychology, as it has become aware of the virtues and the need to recover them, has begun to develop an important virtue of its own—humility. Psychology has become much more humble over the past thirty years. And this has happened for several reasons. First, psychiatry and the biological sciences have made important new contributions to therapy, so that today people suffering from depression, obsessions, and many other psychological problems take medication, which tends to be more effective, immediate, and cheaper than long-term therapy (despite the complications and side-effects that medications can cause). Second, many of the leading enthusiasts for psychology and psychotherapy in the '60s and '70s soon learned what the majority of psychologists have now recognized: that although psychotherapy is helpful, it rarely provides life-transforming insight or happiness. As a result, many psychologists themselves moved off into spirituality and religious experience as a more successful form of healing (Abraham Maslow was an early example).

Health care practice has also forced psychology to confront itself and to revise its self-understanding. Managed health care has made it difficult for patients to have long-term psychotherapy, as insurance companies will only pay for short-term therapy (a maximum of perhaps twelve sessions). Short-term therapy also tends to be a kind of pragmatic cognitive/behavioral therapy, without the grandiose theoretical ambitions of

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the first psychological systems. Furthermore, as a cost-saving measure, HMOs have begun to support therapy by people with MA degrees, with the result that fewer clients can afford to pay the price of a therapist with a doctoral degree.

Another important development, and in some ways another humbling experience for psychology, has been psychology's own success and growth. In the early days of psychotherapy, patients were mostly drawn from the highly educated class and social elites, especially the most secular among them. For example, Sigmund Freud never published a case history of a patient who was seriously religious; it is not clear that he ever had such a patient. Nor, apparently, did he have associates who were seriously religious. Over time, however, with the growth of university psychology programs and the production of large numbers of trained psychotherapists, the clientele for psychotherapy naturally expanded to include more of the public at large. In the United States, the great majority of people are religious; it is even possible that involvement in religion has been increasing in recent years. In order to treat such people, psychotherapists have had to address religious issues and to take them seriously—at the very least they had to treat their religious clients with respect. I have also observed that many clinical psychologists today are themselves religious, and it is worth noting that today the clergy is one of the most important referral networks for clients.

Finally, a major theoretical reason for the scaling back of psychology's early and unseemly hubris has been the decline of the secular ideal itself. Today we are witnessing startling growth in Christianity in the U.S. and throughout much of the world. Within Judaism, Orthodoxy has grown vigorously both in Israel and in the U.S. All around the world, secularism is withering.

Paradoxically, postmodern theory has contributed to this development. The contradictions within modernity, first made visible in the writings of Nietzsche, are now widely recognized. Whatever the validity of postmodern claims, this change in the intellectual climate has been another factor in psychologists' gradual surrender of the scientific ideal as a goal toward which to direct their efforts.

Postmodernism has also called into question modern psychology's central construct of the "self," with the result that general theories of the person or the self have lost much of their appeal. (Perhaps the two theories that have been most eclipsed by recent developments are Freudianism and behaviorism.) The postmodern view is that each patient deserves his or her own theory. Again, such a view is arguable, but it is clear, at least, that if the self has been deconstructed to the point where, as some postmodern theorists claim, there is no self (at least no coherent or integrated or authentic self), then psychological theories of self-actualization will find no purchase—and no purchasers.

In short, as we look back at the recent and ongoing transformations in all three branches of the discipline, it is clear that the psychological guild is becoming older and wiser—both more spiritual and more pragmatic—than it was in its overconfident early days.

I close on a guardedly optimistic note. On the horizon I see the potential for a psychology that I call "transmodern." By this term I mean a new mentality that both transcends and transforms modernity. Thus, it will leave both modern and postmodern psychology behind. It will bring in transcendent understandings that may be idealistic and philosophical (e.g., the virtues), as well as spiritual and religious. It will transform modernity by bringing in an intelligent understanding of much of premodern wisdom. Recently the possibility of religious contributions to a transmodern psychology have become evident. The International Forgiveness Institute has been established under Robert D. Enright at the University of Wisconsin, and an institute devoted to the study of love has been founded by Stephen G. Post at Case Western Reserve. Both institutes have received substantial funding. Also relevant here is the fact that the American Psychological Association actively sought out and then published in 2000 a book on forgiveness in psychotherapy by Enright and Richard Fitzgibbons. The psychologist Everett Worthington has also made major contributions to understanding the process of forgiveness, and his work has received much attention both from the general public and the media.

Moreover, in recent years the Christian theology of personalism has developed a new theoretical framework for understanding the person, including the goals of psychotherapy. This is a special project of another new institute: the Institute for the Psychological Sciences, in northern Virginia. Finally, another piece of evidence for the emergence of a new psychology is the work by Vincent Jeffries, which revives the important but long-neglected contributions of Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, who more than fifty years ago developed the concept of "integralism": a model of social science involving transcendent and religious factors.

This new psychology, should it develop, will be a smaller and humbler discipline. But it will also be a much more useful one. In such a transmodern world, psychology would be the handmaid of philosophy and theology, as from the beginning it was meant to be. FT

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Hot Spell

O sun, old alchemist, you've set us wrong.
Heat grips the land; the ditch-cut where the stand
of alders sipped is dry. Your brassy gong
has summoned dust from Africa and dancing
decks have sprung beyond the town so nights
bring shadows through the fields to trysts in lanes.
Kitchens are like samovars at noon
and hens stroll in our open door, incline
their heads and pause, alert, mid-stride until
my youngest aunt scatters them with a broom.

Singing, bruised with love again, she browns
her legs with Miner's Liquid Stocking Tan.
Her dreams, she says, are tangled up in sounds
of courtyard fountains and a bullfight band;
our roads are dusty and the air so sweet
the church-bells might be Carcassonne or Arles.
Off Britain's lee, people of rain and mist,
beehive cells and prayer-rocks, the lost
tribe of Europe, how have we drifted here,
she asks, and who can remember heat like this?

O cousin altars, saints of Southern squares
among your smoky tapers, brass and dust,
do not forget us now! Our priest has fired
a fighting sermon at the sin of lust
to hold this god at bay while we still burn.
He knows that when the Western weather sends
the driving rain in sheets across our yard,
under the low unknowing clouds and turns
tin dairy roofs to panpipes frilled with wind,
the grey Atlantic brings us back to God.

Oliver Murray

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The Call to Holiness

A Statement of Evangelicals and Catholics Together

Over more than ten years, this group of Evangelicals and Catholics, speaking as individuals committed to their respective communities but without any official mandate, has explored important areas of agreement and disagreement among us. In our first round of conversations and in the resulting statement of 1994, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium," we were able to recognize one another as brothers and sisters in Christ and to affirm the positive value of the witness to the gospel rendered by our several communities, notwithstanding differences and disagreements. In 1997, we were able to issue a second statement, "The Gift of Salvation." In that statement we affirmed that the justification of sinners, which is not earned by any good works or merits of our own, leads us toward the fullness of salvation that is promised in the final kingdom.

In our third statement, "Your Word is Truth" (2002), we found a notable convergence in our views concerning the transmission of God's saving Word through Holy Scripture and tradition. The following year we took up the interpretation of the phrase "The Communion of Saints" that appears in the Apostles' Creed, and there we affirmed that, by virtue of our communion with Christ, we are in a certain, albeit imperfect, communion with one another in his body, the Church. That round of discussions called our attention to the holiness that is proper to God alone but in which human beings are called to participate. Such participation means nothing less than to be drawn into the very life and love of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Holiness is also participation in the life of the Church, which is the holy people called into being by God's saving work in Christ. Following up on this theme, we wish now to consider the ways in which our communities and their individual members can and must foster and embody holiness.

As is clear from our earlier statements, we believe that salvation is realized through union with God, who is all-holy (Leviticus 11:6-8, 21:6-8; I Peter 1:15-16). The gift of salvation is effected and bestowed only through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ (I Timothy 2, Acts 4:11-12). While thanking God for this inestimable gift, we acknowledge our failures and seek to find ways in which we, our communities, and our world can more fully respond to the call to holiness.

I. *We Are Christians*

According to the apostolic witness, the call to holiness begins with divine election: God's summons to Israel, and later to the Church, to be a holy nation, a people set apart as God's own treasured possession, called to worship, witness, and good works (see Ephesians 1:4, I Peter 2:9). All of us are consecrated to the one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—in whose name we are baptized (Ephesians 4:4-6). By his sacrificial death on the Cross, Jesus Christ enables us, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to share in the holiness that he embodies and accomplishes for us. Our conformity to Christ involves a radical love that is cruciform, requiring a profound gift of self. "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). By incorporating us into Christ, the Holy Spirit also makes us members of his body, the Church.

The relationship of the Christian to Christ is expressed in a variety of biblical metaphors. We have already spoken of our being members of his body. We may also speak of our being branches grafted on the Vine, who is Christ. The relationship may also be expressed as our inclusion in the Covenant of the New Testament—a covenant in which Jesus is the Lord and we are his servants. However expressed, our union with Christ is profoundly transformative.

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This transformation manifests itself differently to different people. For some it is experienced as a powerful and specifiable moment, engaging the deepest affections. For others it is experienced as a deepening of faith in Christ and a peaceful sense of being welcomed into the communion of believers. For all it is the knowledge of being called out of darkness into God's marvelous light (I Peter 2:9). However differently experienced, the gift of grace is to be preserved and cultivated throughout the life of the Christian.

Our different traditions, notwithstanding their doctrinal differences, agree that faith and baptism, as the sacrament of faith, belong together. Christian faith should always lead to baptism, and baptism, conversely, should always be accompanied by Christian faith. Baptism is mandated, not optional. It is the gateway to the Christian life.

Some of our traditions reckon baptism as a sacrament of constitutive importance for Christian existence. Others see it rather as a sign and expression of a new Christian life already received. But on either view, baptism involves a lifelong engagement to grow in union with Christ and labor in the service of the gospel.

Sadly, the level of commitment is much lower than it ought to be. In all our communities, there are many who are members in name only. Many of us live in a manner that brings disgrace on the name of God. The call to holiness entails a continuing call to repentance and transformation of life. Many, however, have received practically no instruction in Christian doctrine; many fail to measure up to the norms of Christian conduct. Weak and sinful members, we agree, should not be treated with harshness and contempt, but rather with compassion, each of us being painfully aware of our own frailty. We strive to find ways of helping inactive, alienated, and marginal Christians to rise to the dignity that is theirs as children of God.

II. *Becoming Who We Are*

Christian existence is by its very nature relational. Christians are related to God as their Father, to Christ as their older brother, and to all their fellow Christians as members of the same family. The Holy Spirit maintains and animates all these relationships. "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25).

To be a Christian is always both a gift and a task. We are called to be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48). Yet even the most exemplary of Christians must confess with St. Paul, "Not that I have already obtained this or made it my own; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. . . . I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12-14).

The command, "Be holy, as I am holy," already given under the Old Law, holds in a special way for Christians (Leviticus 11:44-45; cf. 1 Peter 1:16). Paul exhorts the Philippians to be "children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15). The authenticity of the Christian life is manifested in the fruits of holiness. Jesus taught us that faithful disciples would be known by their fruits (Matthew 7:20).

Holiness entails a transforming encounter with the living Christ. This conversion, which is ongoing in the Christian life, means that one becomes a disciple of Christ, and discipleship necessarily entails discipline. Christians know they are not perfect, but they together constitute a people that is different. In the early Church, Christians were able to point to the probity of their lives. They did not steal and murder; they did not practice divorce, adultery, infanticide, or abortion. In the second-century *Letter to Diognetus* the author boasted that Christians "dwell on earth, but are citizens of heaven. . . . What the soul is to the body, Christians are to the world" (chap. 5, sec. 1). Somewhat later, Minucius Felix puts on the lips of the hero of a literary dialogue the words: "While the jails are crammed with your kind, they do not hold a single Christian, unless he be accused on account of his religion, or unless he be an apostate" (Octavius, chap. 35). Christians attracted pagans to join them because they excelled in virtue and mutual affection. They were seen to love Christ and his Church even to the point of giving up their lives.

It is a great scandal that so many Christians of our day, while continuing to be identified as members of the Church, fail to respond to the call to holiness. Too many, misunderstanding the nature of faith and presuming upon the grace of God, disregard the commandments of God. Such Christians rely on what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace," evading "the cost of discipleship." They have drifted far from the biblical precept: "Confirm your call and election" (2 Peter 1:10), which is expounded as meaning, "Supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness. . . ." (2 Peter 1:5-6). It is time, therefore, for Catholics and Evangelicals, corporately and individually, to recommit ourselves to the life of discipleship that ought to be the distinctive mark of Christians.

Committed as they are to Christ as the source and model of all that is holy, Christians are in no way exempted from obedience to the moral law permanently inscribed by the Creator in human nature (Romans 2:15). They are bound to the moral precepts of the Decalogue which are confirmed and brought to sur-

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passing fulfillment in Christ. "If you love me," says the Lord, "you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). To reject his commandments is to reject him and thus to forfeit our ability to abide in him and to bear fruit (see John 15:1-11). While individuals have different vocations, all are called to obey the commandments and especially the commandment of love, the greatest of them all (Matthew 22:37-40).

God has given us ample means to participate in the fullness of His love. We are to hear and study the word of God, especially as it comes to us in the Holy Scriptures. There is a growing practice among serious Christians—Evangelical, Catholic, and others—to join in Bible study and prayer groups. This is attended by a new appreciation of the *lectio divina*, the devotional and meditative reading of the Bible, notably in the discipline of daily prayer. Encouraged by these developments, we rejoice in a greater measure of common catechesis based on Scripture and the ecumenical creeds that we share.

Corporate worship on the Lord's Day is central to the Christian life. We are agreed that the Sunday gathering should be marked by the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Catholics are coming to a renewed appreciation of the proclamation of the Word in the eucharistic assembly. Many Evangelicals are recovering historic forms of Christian worship, incorporating the preaching of the Word within the context of communal prayer, worship, and participation in the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 10:16).

As fellow members of the community of faith, we should also confess our sins and failures to God and one another, especially to those whom we have offended, according to the opportunities and requirements of our respective communions (I John 1:8-9, James 5:16). In all cases, sinners must be reconciled to God and the Church, making a firm resolve to amend their ways. Whether as Catholics or as Evangelicals, we are spiritually responsible for fellow Christians. We should engage in mutual encouragement and correction, performing this duty with love and tact. All of us will be summoned in the end to give an account of our stewardship. Our source of forgiveness is in God's reconciling work in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18), and our accountability is, in this and all else, to Christ the Lord "who is to judge the living and the dead" (2 Timothy 4:1).

III. *Witness and Mission*

The Church cannot rightly be conceived as a self-created or self-enclosed entity. It is a body of believers gathered by God and sent on mission to the world. In going forth into the world, Christians are not venturing into a foreign territory. By his death on the Cross and his glorious exaltation to the Father's right hand, Christ has been made Lord over the whole world, even though his dominion is not universally acknowledged (Philippians 2:9-11). Those who deny his lordship or serve idols and other deities are not beyond the sovereignty of Christ but are, albeit unknowingly, his subjects. The world, insofar as it is captive to sin, is under the power of the evil one and still awaiting the liberation that Christ has won for it (I John 5:19).

The entire mission of the Church may be summarized under the rubric of evangelization. Evangelization in the broadest sense is proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to all people and bringing that gospel to bear, by word and deed, on the totality of things. According to the Scriptures, God's Word in Jesus Christ should penetrate into the hearts and minds of believers, governing their ideas and activities and, through their ministry, permeating the cultures and social institutions of the world (2 Corinthians 10:5). All of creation, wounded by original sin, is to be healed and redirected in Christ to its true goal, the glory of the Creator (Colossians 1:19-20).

The missionary activity of the Church should not be understood as the task of a few specialists. The Church is missionary in nature. It is the duty and privilege of every Christian to "declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9). The precise form of evangelization to which believers are called depends upon their particular vocations. Some are called to travel to other lands and bring the good news to peoples who have not previously heard or accepted it. All, and especially parents, are called to impart Christian truth within their own families. Those in business and politics are called to bear witness in the marketplace and the public square. Whatever one's work or calling, occasions arise for professing one's allegiance to Christ and for inviting friends and associates, as well as casual acquaintances, to share one's faith.

Lay men and women should not think that the secular character of their vocation consigns them to an inferior rank in the Church's mission. On the contrary, the Church with its ministerial and sacramental structures is entirely ordered toward the redemption of the secular, meaning this world (the *saeculum*). The Second Vatican Council was not speaking only for Catholics when it declared that the normal vocation of the laity is to "seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God" (*Lumen Gentium* 31). The plan of God, in turn, cannot be fully understood apart from Christ and the gospel, which alone disclose the deeper meaning and orientation of all temporal activities. The Amsterdam Declaration affirms, "The salvation Jesus brings and the community of faith he calls forth are signs of his

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kingdom's presence here and now, though we wait for its complete fulfillment when he comes again in glory. In the meantime, wherever Christ's standards of peace and justice are observed to any degree, to that degree the kingdom is anticipated, and to that extent God's ideal for human society is displayed."

In our first statement, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," we pointed out a number of areas in the right ordering of society on which we can and should cooperate. Our response to the call to holiness requires us to exemplify and advance a culture of life. This includes defense of religious freedom and the marriage-based family, resistance to evils such as abortion, euthanasia, eugenics, and coercive population control, and a devotion to justice for all, especially for the poor. We now renew all of these commitments as aspects of our vocation to pursue holiness together. Cooperation among Christians, we believe, vividly expresses the bond that already unites them and sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the Servant (cf. Vatican II, *Unitatis redintegratio*, 12; Lausanne Covenant, 7).

IV. *Suffering and Hope*

Christ promised that the pursuit of holiness would be difficult. He said that his disciples would face adversity and persecution (John 16:33). Christians should not be surprised by opposition and setbacks. Paul assures us that God works in all things for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). Stirred by the example of the martyrs who died rather than deny their Lord, Christians today should be prepared to make sacrifices for their faith. Such sacrifices can be a radiant proof of their love of God and a source of inspiration to others.

Contemporary culture tends to look upon suffering and death simply as evils. Christians, however, recognize that in the plan of God suffering, patiently endured, can deepen our union with Christ in his suffering and thus become a royal road to holiness (Philippians 3:10). Although Christ's suffering was sufficient for the redemption of the world, Christians can grow in the life of grace by uniting their own sufferings with his. Paul refers to this great mystery when he speaks of our filling up what was wanting in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, the Church (Colossians 1:24).

We would find it impossible to endure suffering and failure with patience and joy except that Christ has given us by his words, his glorious resurrection, and the gift of the Holy Spirit a sure hope that he will never abandon his disciples. After they have suffered a little while, he will bring them into the fullness of his kingdom (I Peter 1:6-7). The world today desperately needs a hope that cannot be disappointed—a hope that is anchored at a point beyond this world and its contingencies.

Our churches, separated though they be, witness to this hope. It is our prayer that, recognizing our solidarity in hope, we may now proclaim it more effectively together. As we preach to others, we attend to ourselves, lest in preaching to them we ourselves becomes castaways (I Corinthians 9:27). The good example of Christians, indeed, is often the most effective form of witness.

The spiritual renewal of our communities, their missionary activity, their service to society, and their quest for visible unity are, we are confident, indivisible aspects of the Holy Spirit's work in our day. In all these endeavors, holiness and the pursuit of holiness has unquestioned priority. We urge all Christians to devote themselves to these tasks with eyes fixed on Christ, "whom God has made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). FT

Evangelical Protestants

Dr. Harold O. J. Brown, *Reformed Theological Seminary*
Mr. Charles Colson, *Prison Fellowship*
Dr. Timothy George, *Beeson Divinity School*
Dr. Kent Hill, *Church of the Nazarene*
Dr. Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Church of God School of Theology*
The Rev. T. M. Moore, *Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church*
Dr. Thomas Oden, *Drew University Emeritus*
Dr. James Packer, *Regent College*
Dr. Sarah Sumner, *Azusa Pacific University*
Dr. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Trinity Evangelical Divinity School*
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Sin, Grace, and Zero Tolerance

An Exchange

Germain Grisez

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, adopted by the Catholic bishops of the United States in Dallas in 2002, is being reviewed and will be revisited by the bishops at their meeting in June 2005. Article 5 of the Dallas Charter mandates that a cleric be removed permanently from ministry for even a single act of abuse. (The expression "removed from ministry" involves ambiguities that will be clarified below.) Plainly some in the U.S. and apparently many in Rome want that provision changed, so that some who engage in sexual wrongdoing with minors will be returned to ministry.

In an article in *America* magazine (October 18, 2004), Archbishop Harry J. Flynn offered reasons that tell against significantly changing Article 5, at least in the near future: the lack of means to identify offenders who will never offend again; the likelihood that some dioceses would make mistakes that would harm all dioceses; the difficulties that arise both in informing the faithful that a cleric reassigned to them has been an offender and in not informing them; the reputation of the priesthood as a whole; the Church's credibility; and the safety of children: "The reassignment of even one priest who then harms another child is utterly unacceptable."

Avery Cardinal Dulles had previously argued in the same magazine (June 21, 2004) in favor of respect for the rights of accused priests (who might well be innocent), canonical due process in investigating and making judgments, reasonable access to trial for those who do not admit committing a crime of which they might be guilty, and the need for universal church law to deal with the universal problem of clerical sexual wrongdoing. On these matters, I agree with him.

Cardinal Dulles also argued that in adopting the Dallas Charter the United States bishops were taking positions at odds with the principles they affirmed in their November 2000 critique of the American criminal justice system. This argument assumes that some crimes and punishments in that system are comparable to the canonical crime of clerical sexual wrongdoing with a minor and the ecclesiastical penalties available for it. That assumption, I shall argue, is false.

Cardinal Dulles especially criticized the provision of Article 5 that he called "zero tolerance." Some of his criticisms concern only past offenses; I will not deal with them. I shall deal with two arguments he offered against "zero tolerance" that bear on future offenses.

I summarize the first one: the principle of proportionality requires that the punishment fit the crime; but "zero tolerance" imposes the ultimate penalty on all offenders; therefore, it is unjust to those whose offenses are comparatively slight. This argument assumes that some instances of clerical sexual wrongdoing involving a minor do not warrant permanent exclusion from ministry. That assumption, I shall argue, is false.

The main argument Cardinal Dulles offered is his second one, which ran as follows:

> Forgiveness and reinstatement are appropriate when the sinner has repented and made a firm resolve of amendment, and when there is no rea-

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> sonable likelihood of a relapse. The John Jay Report, published in February 2004, makes it clear that the majority of accused priests have only a single accusation against them. There is no reason to think that the protection of young people requires the removal from the ministry of elderly or mature priests who may have committed an offense in their youth but have performed many decades of exemplary service. Such action seems to reflect an attitude of vindictiveness to which the Church should not yield.

This argument is vulnerable to several criticisms. First, it assumes that the protection of young people is the *only* end that justifies permanently excluding clerics from ministry. I shall refute that assumption. Second, it rests on a confusion of sin and forgiveness on the one hand with abuse of a role and reinstatement in it on the other. Parents ought to forgive a repentant babysitter who takes their infant out to a party, but they need not employ her again. Third, the 2004 study of clerical sexual abuse by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice does not support an argument based on what is assumed to be true of clerics who "may have committed an offense," i.e., a single act of abuse. For, although that study makes it clear that 55.7 percent of the accused priests and deacons had only a single allegation against them, it also makes it clear that 71 percent of the victims said they were abused more than once.

Fourth, some who demanded "zero tolerance" in 2002 probably were motivated by vindictiveness. But many who supported Article 5 plainly were motivated by their desire to end the disaster caused by the previous practice of reinstating offenders who had "repented" and seemed unlikely to "relapse." Finally, Cardinal Dulles intends his argument to apply to future offenses. But it begins with some clerics who committed offenses in the past. In the years when bishops and religious superiors reinstated priests who subsequently behaved well, they also reinstated priests who "relapsed." Most bishops and superiors probably tried to use criteria like those Cardinal Dulles proposes. Yet despite their best efforts, they failed to identify the many offenders who would, in fact, freely choose to sin again.

With respect to future acts of clerical sexual wrongdoing involving minors, I believe the policy adopted in Article 5 of the Dallas Charter ought to be maintained in its essentials, not only in the United States but in the universal Church. However, permanent exclusion from ministry can take different juridical forms. Therefore, I reformulate, within the framework provided by the 1983 Code of Canon Law, the policy for which I shall argue, which consists of two provisions.

(1) In every case in which a cleric has committed a gravely imputable offense against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue with a minor, the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state is just, warranted, and ought to be imposed (see Canon 1395, § 2).

(2) In cases in which a cleric has engaged in similar behavior but it is apparent that his act was not gravely imputable, he is not liable to penal sanctions (see Canon 1321, §§ 1 & 3). However, such a cleric must be presumed to be permanently disabled. Therefore, his Ordinary should provide for his welfare and for the Church's public good through appropriate means (see Canon 1348). If the cleric wishes to continue in ordained ministry, his Ordinary should assign him to some ministry, consistent with his disability, for which he already is, or can become, qualified. But he is unqualified for any ministry involving face-to-face contact with anyone other than fellow clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life, and adult employees of the Church. The Ordinary should treat him with the same respect and provide him with the same benefits (see Canon 281, § 2) as a cleric afflicted with some physical disability that gravely limits his capacity to serve. But if such a cleric prefers removal from the clerical state, that preference along with his permanent disability ought to be counted as one of the most grave causes that are required for the Apostolic See to grant a rescript of laicization (see Canon 290).

In his article, Cardinal Dulles specifically argued against laicizing offending clerics. Noting that involuntary loss of the clerical state can be imposed (see Canon 290), he went on: "But such removal from the clerical state should be exceedingly rare, since it obfuscates the very meaning of ordination, which confers an indelible consecration. It reinforces the false impression that priesthood is a job dependent on contract rather than a sacrament conferred by Christ." This argument assumes that even if the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state were regularly imposed on clerics who engage in sexual wrongdoing with minors, that crime would not become rare. That assumption, I shall argue, is false. Still, by this argument, Cardinal Dulles rightly calls attention to a relevant and very important truth: ordination is an indelible consecration conferred by Christ.

For Christians, sexual immorality is evil not only in the ways it is for others but in a far graver way: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your

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body" (1 Corinthians 6:19–20). By violating their own bodies in committing sexual sins, Christians, paradoxically, violate what is not their own. By Jesus' redemptive act and their baptism into it, Christians are consecrated and incorporated into Christ. Forming one body in him, they are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Rather than profane that temple, Christians must glorify God in their bodies.

A Christian spouse glorifies God in his or her body not only by engaging in chaste marital intercourse but by using every bodily capacity in carrying out his or her unique, personal vocation. Those publicly committed to permanent celibate chastity are consecrated by their profession of the evangelical counsel or by the Church's rite of clerical ordination or the consecration of a virgin. They glorify God in their bodies in an especially perspicuous way by closely following Jesus and carrying out the services to his kingdom—to God and to neighbor—to which the Father calls each of them. Moreover, in being ordained, all clerics, whether married or committed to celibacy, are "consecrated and designated, each according to his grade, to nourish the people of God, fulfilling in the person of Christ the Head the functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing" (see Canon 1008). Therefore, besides glorifying God in their bodies as other married or celibately chaste Christians do, clerics do so in a special and marvelous way when they cooperate with the Lord Jesus, the Church's head, in his use of their bodies as living instruments to carry out his own saving acts.

Some entities are especially sacred—places, persons, and things specifically dedicated to God and his worship. Such entities deserve special respect; one who fails to give it commits a sacrilege. That sin "consists in profaning or treating unworthily the sacraments and other liturgical actions, as well as persons, things, or places consecrated to God" (*Catechism* § 2120). Those who wish to dishonor God and, in order to do so, choose to violate the sacred are gravely irreverent. But even if a gravely sinful action that violates the sacred is chosen for another reason, and the irreverence is only a side effect, the sacrilege is grave matter. Thus, a Christian who severely assaulted a priest or a sister in a quarrel over a parking space, knowing the victim to be a man or a woman "of God," would be guilty not only of a grave sin of battery but of grave sacrilege.

All violations of the sixth commandment by or with anyone who has undertaken celibate chastity for the kingdom's sake are also sacrileges. Some classical moralists debated whether such sins involving a priest consecrated both by ordination and by a vow of chastity constituted one or two sacrileges. Be that as it may, just as chaste clerics acting *in persona Christi* glorify God in their bodies in a special and marvelous way, clerics who violate the sixth commandment of the Decalogue profane their bodies in a special and awful way. For by ordination, their bodies have been consecrated permanently, so that at all times they are Jesus' living instruments. Therefore, clerics who violate the sixth commandment not only commit a sacrilege against the triune God but also precisely against the Word incarnate, who does his saving acts by using the bodies of ordained ministers, bodies he has appropriated as his own living instruments.

Although such sacrileges always are grave, as with other sins, circumstances can increase their gravity. Just as insulting one's mother in someone else's presence is worse, other things being equal, than insulting her in private, so the sacrilege involved in a cleric's sexual wrongdoing with another is worse, other things being equal, than that involved in solitary sins. Moreover, when the sexual wrongdoing not only is with another but is done with someone who might well make it public, the irreverence, and therefore the gravity of the sacrilege, is greater still.

The preceding considerations show why a cleric's sexual wrongdoing with a minor is graver than similar wrongdoing by a lay person. The following considerations show how other circumstances not only further increase the gravity of the cleric's sin but make it an offense against the Church, an offense that warrants the most severe available penalty.

Sometimes unchaste men who are not clerics pick up a girl or a boy to whom they are a stranger for casual sexual activity. Because minors are vulnerable and deserve special protection, doing that is not only gravely immoral but is—or surely ought to be—a crime in every nation's law code. If a school teacher behaves similarly with one of his own students, the seriousness of the crime is greater. The teacher betrays the trust not only of the child's parents, but of the youngster, of the school board and administrators who employ him, and of his fellow teachers, with whom he ought to cooperate in safeguarding the welfare of the students.

Although ordained men are assigned to minister in some particular community, Jesus may call on them to make his saving acts available to any human being, and they are always and everywhere deacons, presbyters, or bishops of the Catholic Church. Every person they meet—not least, every child—is entrusted to them by Jesus and the Church for whatever word of faith or other spiritual help they can reasonably provide. So, the cleric who offends against the

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sixth commandment with a minor betrays the trust of Jesus, of the Catholic Church, of his bishop or religious superior and fellow clerics, of the minor's parents, and of the victim himself or herself. While that betrayal of trust is closely related to the wrong done to the minor, the two are distinct. The betrayal of trust is the basic thing that justifies canonically punishing the cleric's act.

Another element of the justification for canonical punishment is the damage to the Church and her mission that will result from the cleric's act if it becomes known. From now on, every cleric in the world should know that surrender to a temptation to sin sexually with a minor means accepting the risk that his sin and crime will be widely publicized. Even if the act does remain secret, taking that risk greatly wrongs Jesus, the Church, and her mission. For if it becomes known, the act will damage the Church and her mission in many ways. For example, awareness of a Catholic cleric's sexual wrongdoing with a child will make some people less open to hearing the gospel the Church teaches, less disposed to believe it, and less inclined to respond favorably to it. It will make approaching any Catholic cleric less appealing to some people. It will impede spiritually fruitful free association and relaxed familiarity between Catholic clerics and minors. It will make a vocation to the clergy harder to discern and less attractive to accept. Nobody doubts that the good work clerics do in carrying out the Church's mission provides people with salvific benefits they would not otherwise enjoy. A cleric choosing to sin sexually with a minor accepts the risk of lessening those benefits. In doing so, he also accepts an incalculable risk to innumerable souls. This sinner's betrayal of trust is like treason that might well lead to the loss of many lives. But what traitors to Jesus and his Church imperil is immeasurably more precious than mortal life.

The final element of the justification for canonical punishment is the injury done the victim. It sometimes includes physical and often includes psychological injury. But serious as those forms of injury can be, more serious is the spiritual injury that always is likely to result from—and very often is an essential part of—a cleric's violation of the sixth commandment with a minor. The victim will be less likely to trust and to relate appropriately to clerics in the future. Those who were sexually abused even when they were very young often later experience difficulties in dealing with sexual desires and integrating them with marital fidelity, celibate chastity, or some other upright commitment—something essential not only to psychic health but to rectitude and holiness. Any minor who could resist the cleric's sexual advances or tell about his misbehavior must be led to allow what the cleric does and not reveal it. Thus, those having any sense of the wrongness of the activity must be seduced. Their being led into sin is scandal in the strict sense, that scandal of which Jesus, for good reason, speaks so harshly. God only knows the gravity of a minor's sexual sins with a cleric who seduces him or her, and of the many subsequent, and worse sins, to which the sexual sins of a small child or a young man or woman with his or her seducer are likely to lead.

Jesus firmly directed the apostles not to despise children but to welcome and serve them. He thus made it part of the clergy's pastoral responsibility to help minors recover from any spiritual injuries inflicted by adults' wrongdoing. When minors have been sexually seduced by anyone other than a cleric, good pastors can help them understand both that they have been wronged and how they ought to deal with what happened—not only with what was done to them but with what they themselves did. For example, talking with a twelve-year-old lad seduced by a homosexual, a wise pastor will share the boy's disgust with what the two did, gently help him understand how limited and yet real his own responsibility was, reassure him about his manhood, and use that reassurance to encourage and support his repentance and purpose of amendment. But if the seducer is a cleric, the boy and his parents are far less likely to be open to such pastoral help. To offer it will seem to blame the victim. Therefore, the spiritual damage done to minors by clerical sexual wrongdoing with them is not only very serious but difficult if not impossible to remedy even by the best pastoral effort. (According to the John Jay study, 40 percent of all victims were boys between eleven and fourteen. No doubt some good pastors tried to provide appropriate pastoral care to those boys. But the John Jay study reports that nearly twenty-five million dollars was paid for the "treatment" of alleged victims.)

In sum, any offense by a cleric against the sixth commandment with a minor is an extremely serious crime. It is a betrayal of trust comparable to treason against one's country. It always risks seriously injuring the spiritual goods for which the Church is responsible—goods immeasurably more precious than human life itself. The injury done to the victim's spiritual well-being is likely to be serious and might well be pastorally irremediable. In each and every case, so great a crime warrants a more severe penalty than any penalty a political society can impose on a criminal. So, every cleric who has committed a gravely imputable offense against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue with a minor can be justly dismissed

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from the clerical state—a penalty lighter than some of the penalties political societies impose.

Some argue that to laicize clerics who have abused minors would be to deprive them of the oversight and support the Church should give them, to increase the likelihood that they will abuse again, and thus to increase risks to children. However, laicizing offenders may well reduce the likelihood that they will "abuse" again, for it will deprive them not only of their clerical status, which can be exploited to reassure potential victims and control actual ones, but also of the many opportunities to associate closely with minors that clerical ministry affords. Moreover, to dismiss such clerics is not necessarily to deprive them of the Church's support. God calls every sinner not only to repent but also to live a holy life that will make the most of his or her gifts. In dealing with any cleric who is being dismissed, the Church should treat him as a beloved, prodigal son and make every reasonable effort to encourage him to repent, to discern the vocation to which God then calls him and to undertake it. Clerics being laicized who spurn such pastoral care probably also would evade the Church's oversight, exploit her support, again betray Jesus and his Church, and in doing so inflict on them injuries that cannot be inflicted by a man without clerical status.

Since every cleric who has committed a gravely imputable offense against the sixth commandment with a minor can be justly dismissed from the clerical state, the deterrent value of imposing that penalty without exception can override any consideration that might otherwise argue for mercy in some instances. Still, some will maintain that there will remain many clerics so strongly motivated to commit such offenses that the prospect of dismissal from the clerical state, even if imposed in every instance, will not suffice to deter them, with the bad result that the penalty will become rather common. Various arguments can be made for that view, but none provides cogent support for it.

Some will argue that besides potential discipline by their bishops or religious superiors, clerics always faced the same penalties for sexual wrongdoing with minors that deter most other men; yet many were not deterred; so, there is little reason to expect any penalty to deter all or almost all those tempted to offend. This argument is unsound. In practice, most clerics did not face the same penalties for sexual wrongdoing with minors that deter other citizens. Victims, their parents, wrongdoers' fellow clerics, and their bishops or religious superiors usually did not report the matter to public authorities. Of the 4,211 cases in which information about both clerical status and police contact were reported to those who compiled the John Jay study, only 1,021 were reported to the police. In only 252 cases was a priest convicted of a crime, and only one hundred priests spent time in prison. In some cases, public authorities no doubt left the matter to ecclesiastical authorities. However, their disciplinary measures were not severe. Where those who compiled the John Jay study received allegations with the indication that they had been "substantiated," the priest had been "removed from the clergy" in only 6.1 percent of the cases, while in 53.3 percent he was "sent for treatment."

Others will raise a different objection: criminal law provides severe penalties for crimes such as murder and armed robbery; many people nonetheless commit such crimes; thus even severe penalties do not deter. This argument also is unsound. Even the penalties for crimes such as murder and armed robbery fail to deter certain people—some who are poor and live for the moment, some drug addicts, some psychologically troubled people, and so on. But most Catholic clerics, rather than having the characteristics that prevent such people from being deterred, are more similar to the very many people who are deterred by severe penalties from committing such crimes.

Another possible objection is that criminal law and various professional associations provide severe penalties for people who are socially and psychologically very similar to Catholic clerics; yet those severe penalties do not deter them from some very serious crimes. In response it is only necessary to note that those severe penalties, although available, are rarely imposed. White-collar criminals defraud people of millions of dollars but are forced to pay fines that are hardly more than a light tax on their ill-gotten gains. Physicians known to be guilty of gross negligence are allowed to continue to practice. Lawyers who obviously suborn perjury are not disbarred. In short, upper-middle-class people who bear the responsibility for penalizing serious wrongdoing by their peers or colleagues seldom impose the severe penalties that are available. There is no reason to think those penalties would fail to deter if they were regularly imposed. The same is true of available ecclesiastical penalties.

Still another objection is that even the prospect of dismissal from the clerical state is unlikely to deter the two groups who commit most sexual offenses—those overtaken in unusual situations by unexpected impulses on which they act without reflecting on wrongness or consequences, and those with deep-seated psychological problems. This objection fallaciously assumes that deterrence works only at the moment of temptation. Regularly dismissing offenders will prevent some of both groups from being ordained and some who are ordained from offending. Men without the charism for

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celibate chastity, including some with profound psychological problems, will be less likely to imagine that clerical ministry and life will provide a safe haven and opportunities to satisfy their "needs." Those admitted to seminaries more likely will be unmasked by fellow seminarians or identified by someone participating in their formation. Those ordained who become aware of temptations will be more likely to seek help *before* they commit any offense (and such help ought to be readily available without prejudice). Given all that is at stake, clerics will have a grave obligation to avoid occasions of sinning sexually with a minor, including those "unusual situations" in which unexpected impulses arise. And most will take care to avoid those occasions of sin. In particular, clerics will have a grave obligation to be vigilant to reject, gently but firmly, any improper advances by a minor. If a cleric's failure to fulfill those grave obligations occasions his sexually misbehaving with a minor, his act will be imputable in cause, *and it will be gravely imputable*, even if, for example, he does it while intoxicated and the minor initiates the encounter.

Even many who agree that the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state is *justified* in every instance will make a final objection. Convinced that there will be compelling reasons not to impose that penalty in "a few, truly exceptional cases," and that the Church's law should allow bishops to exercise discretion in those cases, they will support their position with examples. For instance: toward the end of a New Year's celebration, a sexually experienced seventeen-year-old initiates sexual contact with an off-guard priest, who pulls himself together and breaks away within two minutes—but not before another guest observes the couple's unchaste behavior. Questioned about the incident a few days later by his bishop, the priest, who has an excellent record and great promise, admits that what he did was wrong and that he had not been careful enough. His repentance is heartfelt, and he agrees without hesitation that he deserves dismissal from the clerical state. Anyone who offers such an example thinks it obvious that the bishop should be free to exercise discretion.

However, although the example arouses one's sympathy, it does not provide compelling reasons against imposing the admittedly justified penalty. Considering realistically how sympathy and friendship affect judgments, one can be sure that if bishops are free to exercise discretion, some will exercise it in many less exceptional cases. Discipline will become uneven as some make many exceptions, some few, and others none. The exceptions will lessen the penalty's deterrent effect, an effect that benefits many. Thus, so-called mercy to a few will be bought at the cost of depriving others of a support they badly need, a support that burdens no one who stands firm without it.

Of course, some clerics will still misbehave sexually with minors. However, their doing so despite the prospect of dismissal from the clerical state will itself demonstrate their unsuitability to continue in that state. In some cases, they will be morally inauthentic and unrepentant; in others, their acts will lack grave imputability. The latter group probably will include any true pedophile who, despite all precautions, only after ordination manifests his psychopathology—an affliction generally agreed not to be curable even by good psychological care and treatment.

I posited above that a cleric whose sexual misbehavior with a minor is not a gravely imputable act must be presumed to be permanently disabled and unqualified for any ministry involving face-to-face contact with anyone other than fellow clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life, and adult employees of the Church. When every cleric knows well that gravely imputable sexual misbehavior with a minor regularly results in dismissal from the clerical state and that similar misbehavior that appears not to be gravely imputable regularly results in permanent and severe restriction of ministry, one can be morally certain that those who misbehave without grave imputability have flaws that disqualify them from any clerical ministry that might give them access to potential victims. Given that their wrongful act appeared not to be gravely imputable, one must presume that the flaws are psychological. In view of the potential injuries that will result from a mistaken judgment that treatment has made it safe to return the cleric to any ministry in which he would have access to potential victims, the psychological disability must be presumed to be permanent. Therefore, unless such men request laicization, they will need close supervision at all times. Such close, constant, and lifelong supervision cannot be provided for them if they freely travel about, but only if they reside in some strictly cloistered, ecclesiastical institution where they will never come into contact with minors and where the only people to whom or with whom they engage in clerical ministry are fellow clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life, and/or adult Church employees.

Still, such men could use their gifts in carrying on authentic and fruitful clerical ministries. Every one of them could support the pastoral service of his fellow clerics with his prayer and self-denial. A priest especially gifted for preaching could help other clerics improve their homilies. A priest gifted for catechetics and communication with children from eleven to fourteen could carry on that apostolate by correspondence. A

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suitably gifted priest might learn how to build and maintain websites and use that skill to help many dioceses, religious institutes, and other ecclesial entities communicate more effectively. And so on.

Clerical sexual wrongdoing with minors is a very grave offense wherever it occurs. If in some nations it does not yet appear to be very injurious to the spiritual goods for which the Church is responsible, appearances can be deceiving. Good pastors who consider the matter in the light of faith will not tolerate even a lesser degree of such injuries. They will recognize that their first responsibility is to Jesus and to those he has entrusted to their care, and that failing to fulfill it will be cooperating, materially but unjustifiably, in the sacrileges and betrayals to which that failure will lead—and thus will be sharing in the offenders' guilt.

The policy for which I have argued could not be implemented fully and effectively without fair and uniform facilities in—or available to—every local church for receiving and considering allegations of clerical sexual wrongdoing with minors, identifying which ones must be investigated, and trying every cleric whose innocence is not morally certain and whose guilt is not admitted. Facilities also would be needed to help those who are found guilty and dismissed or assigned to very restricted ministries. Providing suitable facilities would require work and money. However, doing so would be a far more fruitful use of the Church's resources than using them to settle claims resulting from the failure of some to fulfill their duty to try to put an end to clerical sexual offenses against the sixth commandment with minors.

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Avery Cardinal Dulles

Germain Grisez and I have broad areas of agreement. Near the beginning of his article he notes four such areas. First of all, he affirms as I do that accused priests (and other clerics) who might well be innocent should be accorded their rights, but he does not specify what those rights might be. Like most others, I would assume that this means a right to their good name and a right to be presumed innocent until found guilty. If the bishop removes them from certain kinds of ministry while the investigation is pending, they should not be treated forthwith as though they were no longer priests. They should not at that point be prohibited from wearing clerical garb or forbidden to attend gatherings of priests, as sometimes happens. The bishop should remain in communication with them; he should grant them a decent salary on which to live, see to it that they obtain competent civil and canonical counsel, and assist with their legal expenses. Many priests have been convicted, it would seem, because they have had to rely on lawyers who volunteered their services but lacked the necessary competence.

Secondly, Dr. Grisez states, as do I, that accused priests should be accorded due process according to canon law. This, too, sometimes fails to happen. Priests are summarily removed on the basis of an accusation perhaps made only by telephone or an anonymous note, often in ways that give the impression that they must be guilty. Many accused priests complain that they are not even told the nature of the charges against them. The charges should be specific and should be in writing, made under oath, and signed by the accuser. The canonical norms for a preliminary investigation should be observed (Canons 1717-19).

The third area of agreement mentioned by Dr. Grisez is that if the preliminary investigation results in a finding that a trial is warranted, and if the priest denies his guilt, he should have access to a timely trial by competent judges, according to the norms of canon law. Many priests have to wait for years in a kind of limbo, unable to clear their names. In some cases the bishop puts pressure on them to apply for laicization, even though they protest their innocence and ardently desire to live out their vocation as priests.

When a trial results in a favorable sentence, the priest should in principle be restored to ministry. It is an abuse if a bishop keeps such a priest for a long or indefinite period from performing the ministries for which he has been ordained, such as saying Mass and hearing confessions. Some bishops, appealing to their discretionary power to apply nonpenal administrative measures for the sake of the common good (see Canon 223, § 2), keep priests indefinitely out of ministry, thereby rendering their vindication by the courts meaningless.

Fourth and last, Dr. Grisez and I agree that there should not be separate canonical legislation for the United States and other countries. At the present time, the policies promulgated by different bishops' conferences are so disparate that, as I remarked in my *America* article, they raise the issue of "geographical justice." Charges that in one country call for permanent exclusion from priestly ministry are treated far less drastically in neighboring countries. The Catholic Church, as a universal society, should have a legal code that holds all over the world. This would not exclude certain exceptions or dispensations in different countries to harmonize with the civil law.

Readers should also note that whereas in my article I

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dealt principally with allegations about past misconduct, Grisez states that the recommendations he is making bear only on future offenses. I take this to mean that the penalties he proposes would not be applied retroactively. As he is surely aware, the Code of Canon Law discountenances retroactive laws, especially when they impose burdens rather than grant favors (Canons 9 and 1313). The prohibition of *ex post facto* laws is widely recognized in jurisprudence, and is explicit in the United States Constitution (Article 1, sections 9 and 10). Normally cases should be tried according to the law as it existed at the time of the alleged crime.

Dr. Grisez, therefore, says nothing in this article about penalties for sexual abuse of minors committed long ago. A particularly sensitive point, raised in my article and elsewhere, is the effort by some states to remove the statute of limitations in such cases and the effort by some bishops to obtain dispensations from the canonical period of prescription, which establishes an acquired right not to be charged with crimes alleged to have happened many years in the past. It is very hard for a priest to defend himself against accusations from the remote past, since memories fade, witnesses die or leave the area, and physical evidence is difficult to obtain. The "recovered memories" stimulated by psychotherapy are notoriously unreliable.

I believe that I have already shown a very large area in which Dr. Grisez either explicitly agrees with me or does not contest my positions. He specifies only two issues on which he thinks we disagree: the definition of sexual abuse and the principle of "zero tolerance." The two issues are not entirely separable, since zero tolerance is most questionable if the definition of sexual abuse is broad or ambiguous.

The Dallas Charter and the accompanying Norms define sexual abuse rather broadly, as including the use by an adult of a minor "as an object of sexual gratification." They state that the transgression must be external and objectively grave, but add that the act need not "involve force, physical contact, or a discernible harmful outcome." They presume that the external act is imputable "unless it is otherwise apparent."

Following other commentators, I have maintained that the definition leaves too much room for ambiguities, especially because some moral theologians maintain that every violation of the sixth commandment is objectively grave. Heribert Jone, in his nearly classic manual *Moral Theology* (1956), lays down the principle that "all directly voluntary sexual pleasure is mortally sinful outside of matrimony. This is true even if the pleasure is ever so brief and insignificant. Here there is no lightness of matter." Similarly, Henry Davis in his *Moral and Pastoral Theology* (1936) declares that "it is grievously sinful in the unmarried deliberately to procure or accept even the smallest degree of true venereal pleasure; secondly, it is equally sinful to think, say, or do anything with the intention of arousing even the smallest degree of this pleasure." Dr. Grisez himself in his *The Way of the Lord Jesus* (1983) holds that "all intentional sexual acts violating the marital good are grave matter." Whether or not this position is morally sound, it does not suffice in the realm of canonical criminal law.

The Code of Canon law states that "just penalties, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state" may be imposed "if the delict was committed by force or threats or publicly or with a minor below the age of sixteen years . . . if the case so warrants" (Canon 1395, § 2). This canon imposes no mandatory penalty for all cases of sexual abuse of a minor but allows for various penalties, depending on the nature of the act and the circumstances. It does not recommend dismissal except in the most serious cases.

At the request of the U.S. Bishops, the Pope in 1994 issued a special derogation from the universal law, so that the special penalties of Canon 1395, § 2 could be applied to misconduct with minors below the age of eighteen rather than sixteen. But it was understood that the diocesan bishop or tribunal judge would take into account the nature of the act and the circumstances of each case in determining the appropriate penalty. In general it may be said that the closer a young person comes to the age of marital consent, the greater his or her responsibility in sexual matters. Exchanging a passionate kiss in an embrace initiated by a sexually experienced girl of seventeen is not equivalent to the molestation of an innocent ten-year-old.

There ought to be something in the Dallas Charter and the Norms corresponding to the distinction made in civil courts between a misdemeanor and a felony. Secular criminal codes generally set forth distinctions among a whole range of offenses, such as indecent solicitation of a child, public indecency, sexual exploitation of a child, obscenity, child pornography, criminal sexual assault, aggravated assault, and predatory assault. Some of these crimes are misdemeanors; others are felonies of various degrees. So, too, in the Church's criminal law, conduct that is crude, offensive, indecent, or inappropriate should be punished, but not necessarily by permanent removal from the ministry. Casual words or touches, even if seriously sinful, should not be treated in the same way as genital penetration, still less as child rape or serial rape.

Proposing to amend the Dallas Charter and accompanying Norms, Dr. Grisez makes a distinction based on the 1983 Code of Canon Law between acts that are and are not "gravely imputable." This is surely an

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improvement on the present texts, but it does not meet the difficulties I have just mentioned. Distinctions ought to be made between different kinds of acts as well as between different degrees of imputability.

This brings me to the second disagreement mentioned by Dr. Grisez: the principle of "zero tolerance." The term itself is misleading, since the question at issue is not whether abuse should be tolerated but whether all abuse should be punished in the same way. Grisez defends severe and permanent penalties for every case, but does so more flexibly than the Charter. Unless the sins are "gravely imputable," he contends, dismissal from the clerical state is not in order. But even for these lesser offenses he at one point calls for permanent exclusion from ministry.

I agree that there are acts of sexual abuse of minors for which permanent exclusion from ministry or dismissal from the clerical state is the appropriate penalty. But I find the category of grave external sin against the sixth commandment too broad for the reasons I have stated. Footnote 2 of the Essential Norms recommends that in cases of doubt about the gravity of the offense, the writings of recognized moral theologians should be consulted, but their opinions are various and inconsistent and fail to address the canonical questions.

Another departure of Grisez from the Dallas Norms is that, in the later sections of his article, he modifies his position on removing the offending priest from all ministry. If the offense was not gravely imputable, he holds, "permanent and severe restriction of ministry" might be appropriate. Living in institutions in which they would never come into unsupervised contact with minors, convicted priests could, Grisez maintains, carry on "authentic and fruitful clerical ministries." He suggests, for example, helping other clerics to improve their homilies, conducting catechetics by correspondence, and maintaining websites for better communication of religious materials. These examples could be multiplied almost without number.

Although I am not fully satisfied with this proposal, I regard it as a vast improvement over the undifferentiated approach of the Dallas Charter. There are some offenses for which the kind of permanent institutionalization Grisez suggests would be appropriate. But I deny that such virtual imprisonment is a necessary and fitting penalty for all gravely imputable acts of sexual misconduct with minors. In some cases return to a normal life with restricted or supervised ministry may be recommended.

I therefore continue to urge the principle of proportionality. In its favor I cite the critique of the United States criminal justice system issued by the United States bishops in November 2000. The bishops declared: "One-size-fits-all solutions are often inadequate. . . . We must renew our efforts to ensure that the punishment fits the crime. Therefore, we do not support mandatory sentencing that replaces judges' assessments with rigid formulations." Pope John Paul II clearly supports the principle of proportionality. In an address to a Plenary Assembly of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith on February 6, 2004, he stated: "Once a delict is proven, in each case you need to discern well both the just principle of proportionality between the offense and the penalty and the predominant need to safeguard the people of God."

Dr. Grisez allows for some proportionality since he proposes different penalties for different degrees of imputability. But he contends that even for an offense that might correspond to a misdemeanor in civil law, the priest should be removed from ministry without possibility of restoration. This penalty seems to me to be unjust and contrary to the gospel. It runs against the apparent meaning of the Pope, who declared, in a meeting with American cardinals on the sexual abuse crisis on April 23, 2002: "We cannot forget the power of Christian conversion, that radical decision to turn away from sin and back to God, which reaches to the depths of a person's soul and can work extraordinary change."

Dr. Grisez objects that in taking a position like that of the Pope, I am failing to recognize the distinction between forgiveness of a sin and reinstatement in ministry. But I am only insisting that there are cases in which offending priests can be not only forgiven but also rehabilitated. Prudence must of course be used. I grant that in some cases it may be difficult to predict the probability of a relapse, even though much has been learned in recent decades about the prognosis in different types of cases. Where there is only a single offense, committed early in life, and a record of decades of unexceptionable service, it may be possible to reach moral certainty that the offense will not be repeated. Recidivism is particularly improbable if, in addition, the priest is aged and infirm.

The trump card in Dr. Grisez's case for severity is the appeal to deterrence. Deterrence is, in my judgment, a legitimate goal of punishment, but this principle must be applied within the framework of justice. Deterrence can sometimes be applied at the expense of justice, as in medieval England, where sheep-stealing was punished by the death penalty. In my view, permanent exclusion from priestly ministry is the spiritual equivalent of the death penalty. For many priests their ministry is the very *raison d'être* of their lives. They have been ordained priests forever "according to the order of Melchizedek." To be forced to present themselves as if they were lay persons is for them a very painful deception; they feel that they are living a lie.

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In an age when priesthood is easily regarded as just another profession, the Church should make every effort to treat her priests with the reverence their indelible consecration deserves. If they have sinned and gone astray, the bishop should still be their father in Christ; he should not deal with them at arm's length, as if he were their prosecutor. And, especially if there is doubt about their guilt, priests should not be cast out of the priestly fraternity to meet the unreasonable demands of hostile groups. In yielding to such pressures, the Church sacrifices the credibility she needs. Whatever the pressures may be, the Church should remain, as Pope John Paul II has said, the mirror of justice.

I have not dealt with every point in Dr. Grisez's vigorously written article. He has some excellent things to say about the importance of chastity, especially among persons consecrated to God by sacred ordination or by vows. I heartily recommend these passages for study and reflection.

At one point, Dr. Grisez seems to refer to the saying of Jesus that it would be better to be thrown into the sea with a millstone about one's neck than to give scandal to the young and innocent (Mark 2:42). This saying can be applied to sexual seduction, but the commentators I have read interpret it as referring directly to those who would induce young or uneducated disciples to fall into apostasy. Sexual sins are one way in which priests can betray the grace of their ordination. But our preoccupation with unchastity should not blind us to the many other ways in which priests can cause the faithful to waver or fall. To judge from the Gospels, it would seem that sins of pride probably cause more spiritual damage than sins of weakness. Repentant sinners may do more for God's glory than some of those who judge them harshly.

Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J. holds the Laurence J. McGinley Chair in Religion and Society at Fordham University.

Tardy

We never exactly mean to dawdle
or let the day slip by.
I stopped at the pond for just a moment
to see if the mallards would try
the corn I'd found for them last evening.
I didn't stay too long.
But time moves slower near to water,
the lazy current strong.
And there are fish to watch in the shallows,
with small new signs of spring:
the green-touched reeds and the willow catkins
like down on a duckling's wing.
And now I'm hurried, hot and tardy,
with penalties to pay,
returned to the world of busy people
and clocks that keep the day.

Joseph Bottum

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Books in Review

Christ and Casserole

Gilead
By Marilynne Robinson
Farrar, Straus and Giroux
247 pp. $23.

Reviewed by J. A. Gray

Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*, published in 1981, is an extraordinary work of art, and many readers have waited impatiently for Robinson to publish a second novel. I'm among them, although I've waited more in dread than in anticipation. Robinson describes American landscapes as superbly as Willa Cather and peers into the American soul as relentlessly as Herman Melville—and in *Housekeeping* she combined these talents to frighten me badly.

Housekeeping takes place in a waterlogged little town in the northwest, where two adolescent sisters, orphaned when their mother drowns herself, become the wards of their aunt, a drifter who leaves off riding the rails in order to come live with them. In the house left them by their dead grandmother, the girls wage a quietly epic struggle against the pull of their aunt's transient ways, against the intrusive lake and its implacable tides, against the grief that becomes a universal solvent. Can the girls avoid the dissolution of their home, their futures, their very souls? Is there any ground on which they can plant an intimacy or nurture an ambition that will not be swamped by sorrow?

Robinson tells their story in a prose that embodies perfectly the entropic sadness that she finds lapping at all foundations and saturating every good intention. Her watery symbolism accumulates a depressing power, as everything begins to fall of its own sodden weight. Love reaches out only for what is out of reach, and eros provides no countervailing warmth, as the men of the family have long since slipped beneath life's surface. Nor is there any prospect of spiritual rescue. Robinson finds among the flotsam some scraps of pagan myth and some pages from the Judaic testaments, old and new, but these wisdoms are themselves orphans, uprooted and adrift. There is no sign of an ark, of a Moses who might part the waters, of a savior who can walk upon the flood without sinking.

In this diluvian world the little church where grandmother used to sing in the choir is a source merely of unwelcome and finally fatal intrusions. The ladies of the congregation bring to the girls' crumbling home not the good news of salvation but only casseroles and coffeecakes that are left untouched and uneaten. Their well-meant meddling incites the book's climax, when the young women set fire to their house and flee across the lake into a life of endless wandering. The people of the church and the town suppose them to be

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drowned—as indeed they are, spiritually. In the contest of life and grief, grief has won.

Housekeeping bears repeated rereading, if one can stand the chill and the damp, and if one can surrender one's secret hope (well, my secret hope) that next time it will turn out differently. It never does. Thus I approached *Gilead* with cautious alacrity. In *Housekeeping* Robinson had demonstrated the futility of any attempt to make a home; would she persuade me in *Gilead* that there is no balm for the sin-sick soul? To my relief, her project in *Gilead* seems to be not to tear down but to build up, or at least to restore to this world much of what she washed away in *Housekeeping*.

As narrator we have not a rootless and unchurched young woman but an elderly Congregationalist minister who has lived all his life in the same parsonage in the town of Gilead, Iowa. When this preacher ("preacher" is what he prefers to call himself) says things like, "I remember walking out into the dark and feeling as if the dark were a great, cool sea and the houses and sheds and the woods were all adrift in it, just about to ease off their moorings," we know we are still on Planet Robinson, but these prove to be the sunnier latitudes of that melancholy globe. The prairies of Iowa and Kansas offer dry land aplenty, and water here is not a carrier of paralyzing sorrow but a healing substance, lustral and often luminous. Male figures, so conspicuously absent in *Housekeeping*, dominate the foreground. The preacher, John Ames, is writing out for his son an account of his life and the lives of his forebears, father and grandfather, who were also ministers of the gospel, dating back to before the Civil War. Thus the church, so dismissible in *Housekeeping*, is central to *Gilead*. Even those Christian casseroles are redeemed: Ames lived in his parsonage as a widower for some forty years, and he dined contentedly on the very dishes, donated by the ladies of his congregation, that the women of *Housekeeping* could not stomach.

THE NOVEL IS A SINGLE long letter, written over the course of half a year or so in the mid-1950s. Reverend Ames, aged seventy-six, has been spurred to this epistolary effort by a medical diagnosis: angina pectoris could kill him at any time. His son, his only child, is seven years old; the letter will be given to the boy's mother, Ames' forty-one-year-old wife, to keep for the boy to read when he is grown. The letter is the preacher's sole legacy ("I do regret that I have almost nothing to leave you and your mother") and in it he attempts to enact the love that he will not be present to give the boy, offering advice, sharing memories, discussing life's meaning—and occasionally (such is the force of professional habit) making notes for new sermons as they occur to him.

Ames writes of his grandfather, an abolitionist preacher and Free Soiler in the Kansas territory in the 1850s, and of his father, a young soldier in the Union army and later a preacher in Gilead, and of his own brief first marriage, which ended with his wife and daughter dead in a premature childbirth. He lived alone for decades—"I didn't feel very much at home in the world, that was a fact. Now I do"—until the boy's mother, a stranger in town, walked into his church one Pentecost Sunday: "She makes a very unlikely preacher's wife. She says so herself. But she never flinches from any of it. Mary Magdalene probably made an occasional casserole, whatever the ancient equivalent may have been. A mess of pottage, I suppose."

Ames has tried always to live as the Lord wants him to live, which for him entails ceaseless prayer, constant self-questioning, and a startlingly ferocious pacificism. He takes a certain modest pride in the fifty years' worth of sermons he has stored in boxes in his attic, noting that he is "up there with Augustine and Calvin for quantity." Impatient with apologetics and uninterested in doctrine ("It was Coleridge who said Christianity is a life, not a doctrine, words to that effect"), he never tires of thinking on the loveliness of creation and

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the goodness of God ("Augustine says the Lord loves each of us as an only child, and that has to be true"). Occasionally he offers an insight from one of his favorite theologians: John Calvin, Karl Barth, and (yes) Ludwig Feuerbach.

Robinson skillfully impersonates this sober, righteous, progressive parson with a hint of poesy in his voice as she interweaves the three themes—his family history, the abolition of slavery, and his practice of the Christian faith—that dominate his seemingly discursive jottings. Suddenly, however, a new event intrudes upon Ames' autumnal reflections: the ne'er-do-well son of Ames' neighbor Boughton, the Presbyterian minister, unexpectedly returns to Gilead. Pastor Boughton is Ames' best friend, and the returning prodigal, now a middle-aged man and still mysteriously erratic, is Ames' godson. Why is he back after so long away? And why does he show such interest in Ames' wife and child?

This matter is resolved, though not wholly to the benefit of the book's integrity, for in concentrating on it Robinson veers away from the carefully crafted illusion of a digressive letter and begins to write scenes straight from, well, a novel. When Robinson's wrap-up of important themes is done, John Ames finds, coincidentally, that he has written enough to his son, and he brings his letter to an elegiac close.

Reviews of *Gilead* have been numerous—ranging from rapturous to respectful—but uniformly superficial. Ames is taken to be a reliable old fellow who imparts his nuggets of gospel-tinged wisdom and his small-town epiphanies with Robinson's unequivocal approval. Robinson is commended for daring to employ so unpromising a mouthpiece and is praised for the artistry with which she (mostly) keeps the loquacious minister from being a bore.

Such readings underestimate both Robinson and Ames. As with the emblematic casserole on the parsonage table, the presentation is homely but the dish is not simple: there are layers upon layers, and it has been simmering a long time. Ames the facile sermonizer finds candor elusive; he steels himself to speak but often draws back; he acknowledges that he is skilled at concealing from himself his own motivations, and he worries repeatedly about people who can "see through" him. Some reviewers have said that Robinson skimps on "plot." But there is no shortage of

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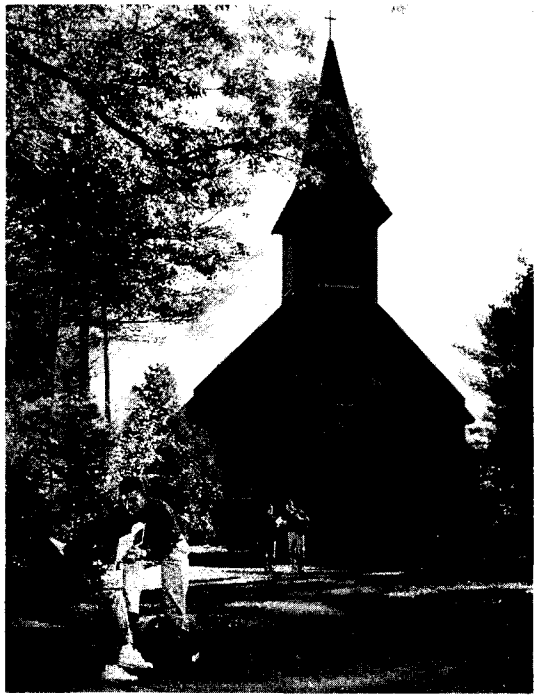

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fraught and suspenseful episodes, including murder, religious terrorism, apostasy, fornication, child abandonment, and secret miscegenation. Of these Ames is the most reluctant of chroniclers, generally proving to say most where he says least. So obliquely and unemphatically are the deepest wounds divulged—his grandfather's commission of a gratuitous and monstrous sin against Ames' ten-year-old father, and Ames' father's loss of his religious faith (abetted, unhappily, by Ames himself)—that a reader who blinks may miss them.

Into Ames' apparent ramblings Robinson has carefully built many omissions, suppressions, and avoidances. Unobtrusive and only dimly sensed, they contribute to one's uneasiness and a sense of buried intrigue. Never does Ames address his son by name or even report his name. (Would not a father writing such a valedictory naturally chant, sing, caress the beloved name of the son of his late age?) Never does he speak the name of his wife, and about her past he is mute, though the single clue of "Mary Magdalene" posted here by the author reads like an unsubtle semaphore. Also questionable are Ames' repeated self-exculpating apologies for his family's looming poverty ("There was no way for me to make any changes to provide for the two of you"). Indications are that his congregation has the money to build a new and bigger church—after he is gone. So is Ames tacitly conveying the congregation's rejection of his new wife?

All in all, Ames' reticent revelations give an impression not so much of mellow wisdom securely possessed as of a pitiable impactedness bravely struggled against. His erotic-domestic resurrection by a wayward young woman late in life has rolled back the stone behind which he had buried his heart. In this new access of feeling, he is dimly aware that some of the warmth of his pastoral compassion derives from the old, banked fires of anger toward his father and grandfather that lie within. Newly alive to so much, he expresses keen regret that he will not be present as a father to help his boy grow up. But is there also, perhaps, a certain relief that he will not be there to wound his son or to suffer the wounds that sons can inflict on fathers? His demanding but beneficent creator, Marilynne Robinson, seems to know about this deeper layer, but she has taken care to keep the good old man from suspecting it himself.

ROBINSON IS FAR too fine an artist to offer us the sort of univocal and easily mastered fiction that some have taken this book to be. She is both persistent and brave. In her superb first novel she gave voice to the griefs and losses of the mother-daughter relationship, placing them in a near-mythic world of flux and darkness. Here she attempts a harder thing, imagining her way into the conflicts and joys of the father-son relationship and staging them more terrestrially, on the familiar American prairie, in the prosaic Midwestern light, along the arc of some of the most impassioned episodes in American history.

It is brave of her, too, to try to body forth, in John Ames, some version of what the church has to offer in response to the ever-fresh and never-less-than-bitter news that we have here no lasting home. The novel may prove to be of less interest as a vehicle of Christian wisdom than as a portrait of fathers and sons—indeed, not all readers will agree that what Ames preaches and practices is (doctrinally, theologically, ecclesiologically) Christianity. But the preacher, damaged as he is and elusive as he may be with other people, is admirably assiduous in trying to turn his face always toward his Lord. With his Bible in one hand and his Feuerbach in the other, he tries to understand the world as God's gift and to offer back unceasingly his thanks and praise. "Wherever you turn your eyes the world can shine like transfiguration," he says in closing his letter to the son he must leave behind. "You don't have to bring a thing to it except a little willingness to see. Only, who could have the courage to see it?"

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The Patriarchal Bargain

Soft Patriarchs, New Men: How Christianity Shapes Fathers and Husbands
By W. Bradford Wilcox
University of Chicago Press
328 pp. $20 paper.

Reviewed by Charlotte Allen

In the imaginations of feminists and their admirers in the media and intelligentsia, there lurks a kind of bogeyman—the conservative Christian man—a neanderthalic creature who, if he does not regularly beat his wife black-and-blue in the name of God, at least keeps her in her proper place, the kitchen, preferably shoeless and perpetually gestating.

We see this monster in Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, where a theocratic patriarchy forbids women to read books, and we see him in the movie *Kinsey*, in which the future sexologist's pompous, teetotaling, Bible-wielding father (played by the massive-browed John Lithgow) cows his wife at the dinner table and disowns his son for daring to attend a different college from the one where dad teaches. We hear the evangelical Promise Keepers movement denounced by Patricia Ireland of the National Organization for Women as a "feel-good form of male supremacy" designed to "keep women in the back seat." And when the Southern Baptists issued a statement in 1998 affirming the father's headship of the family as defined in the New Testament letters of Paul of Tarsus, we heard journalists Cokie Roberts and Steve Roberts warning the nation that this sort of thing could "lead to abuse, both physical and emotional."

Soft Patriarchs, New Men by W. Bradford Wilcox, a young sociologist of religion at the University of Virginia, is a study of the actual surveyed attitudes and practices of the married men of the so-called "religious right" that turns this stereotype on its head. Wilcox reports that Christian conservative fathers, at least the ones who attend church frequently, are actually far more affectionate with and emotionally invested in their wives and children than are their counterparts among either mainline Protestants or the unchurched. They are patriarchs, says Wilcox, with a "traditional,

Charlotte Allen *is the author of* The Human Christ: The Search for the Historical Jesus *(1998).*

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authority-minded approach to parenting," but they are soft patriarchs (more akin, shall we say, to Ned Flanders in "The Simpsons" than to the Commander in Atwood's novel). Wilcox concludes—and this is richly ironic—that Christian conservative fathers display many of the qualities of the sensitive, thoroughly domesticated "iconic new man" whom the feminists lionize.

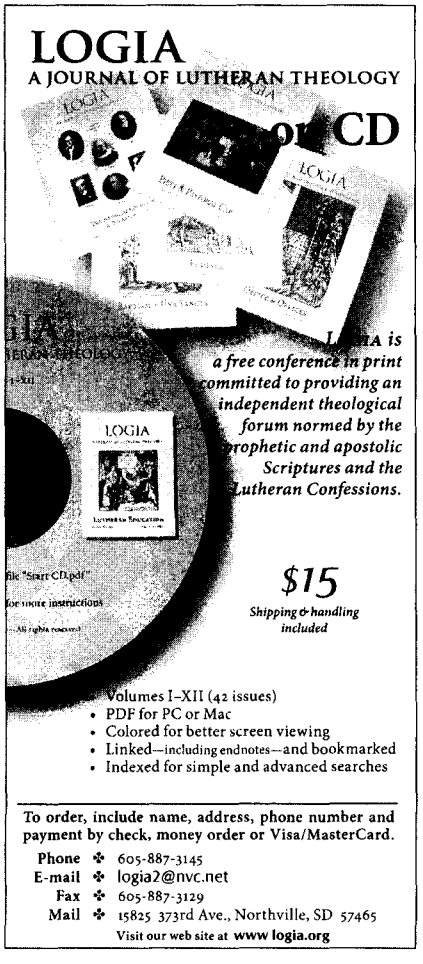
Wilcox has not written a religious or political polemic here but rather a scrupulously even-handed report, basing his conclusions on his statistical analysis of three large-scale national surveys of U.S. adults' social attitudes conducted from the late 1980s through the '90s. He frequently cites the work of Frank Furstenburg and Arlie Hochschild, two sociologists of family and gender relations whose views are by no means ideologically conservative, and he avoids value-loaded language, especially when it comes to describing the mainline Protestant churches whose leadership has, by and large, capitulated to the secular-elitist acceptance of extramarital sex, abortion, homosexuality, and other practices that conservative Christians view as inimical to moral life and family health.

A polemicist might well have salty things to say about this abdication of moral principles that Christians have held since the earliest days of the faith, but in Wilcox's mild and irenic diction the mainline churches are simply "accommodationist," espousing what he calls a "Golden Rule Christianity" that honors tolerance, kindness, and social justice as paramount virtues. Wilcox's aim is clearly to engage his sociological confreres as well as the public at large; thus he lays out his case in such a careful and dispassionate manner that many lay readers are likely to find his book, with its many pages of endnotes and its numerous regression tables, colorless and dull, although its conclusions are anything but that.

WILCOX SEEMS to have picked Protestants to study because their large number of denominations makes them relatively easy to classify by ideological and theological subgroup. (Catholics, for example, can also be classified as liberals or conservatives, but there is no convenient yardstick, even that of frequent Mass attendance, for measuring where they stand.) Mainline Protestants (Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and the like) and evangelical/fundamentalist Protestants (an umbrella group of conservative churches including the Pentecostal, Baptist, Anabaptist, and Reformed traditions) not only belong to distinctly different kinds of churches, but they generally hold distinctly different views on such matters as theological orthodoxy and the inerrancy of the Bible, upon which conservative Christians are predictably conservative. Through the 1950s, however, all Christians of whatever stripe held to what Wilcox calls "the ideology of familism" that invested marriage, childbearing, and the household with sacredness, and in which, at least since the Industrial Revolution, men were the chief economic providers while the domestic sphere and the welfare of the children were chiefly the domain of women.

All this changed when the sexual revolution and the rise of feminism ushered in easy divorce, the expectation of a career outside the home for married women, ready access to contraception and abortion, and the gay-rights movement. The mainline Protestants quickly embraced the new "diversity," especially of family living arrangements. The religious conservatives, beset by this sea change in the secular culture, might have been expected to retrench into their conventional media stereotypes: authoritarian, emotionally uninvolved husbands and fathers, a rigidly patriarchal family style, deeply gendered domestic roles that kept women at home—plus, as Wilcox puts it, "high levels of corporal punishment and domestic violence." Alternatively, many sociologists predicted that, with the increasing emphasis on individualism and the therapeutic in American culture, religion would have an increasingly marginal influence on domestic life, and the traditional family as the 1950s knew it would gradually disappear in the face of "family modernization," as some theorists called it.

Instead, as Wilcox notes, something very different and unanticipated happened. Conservative Protestantism indeed made an aggressive countercultural push, starting in the 1970s, to shore up the traditional family. Efforts ranged from family ministries in individual churches to "parachurch" pastoral groups such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as James Dobson's Focus on the Family to national political organizations such as Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority. But it also subtly accommodated itself to such elements of late modernity as the therapeutic culture, increasing numbers of wives working outside the home, and a new expectation that husbands as well as wives should involve themselves emotionally in home life and the well-being of the children.

The idea was, as Wilcox writes, "that conservative Protestantism domesticates men by linking male authority to a demanding ethic of male familial involvement. It offers men a 'patriarchal bargain' that accords men symbolic authority in the home in return for the exercise of greater responsibility for the well-being of their families." One example of conservative Protestantism's new focus on expressive interpersonal relations, Wilcox notes, is that Fuller Theological Seminary, a leading training ground for evangelical ministers, established a psychology department in 1965.

Hence, the soft patriarch, the "servant leader" who simultaneously negotiates traditional gender roles and an egalitarian ethos with respect to his spouse. The wife submits to her husband, as in the first part of Paul's dictum in Ephesians 5, and the husband fulfills the second part of Paul's injunction by laying down his life for his wife as Christ did for his Church (which might have been what Paul had in mind in the first place). Wilcox's extrapolations from the statistics suggest that the new model of emotionally involved fatherhood is paying off.

Active (that is, regularly churchgoing), married conservative Protestant fathers have more one-on-one interaction with their children than do mainline Protestants, conservative Protestants who seldom attend church, or the religiously unaffiliated. They are also more likely to be involved in youth-related activities. At the same time, conservative pastors and parachurch organizations alike urge fathers not to relinquish their parental authority and to set rules (such as supervising children's television-viewing and monitoring their whereabouts) to counter the morally negative aspects of the secular culture. Churchgoing conservative fathers discipline their children via corporal punishment more frequently than other groups of fathers, but they do so in the context of a religious ideology that urges them never to spank a child in anger. They are less likely to yell at their children than mainline Protestant fathers, and they praise and hug their children more than the other men studied.

On the subject of spousal relations, churchgoing conservative Protestant husbands surpass every other kind of Protestant husband, from mainline to nominal, in making their wives happy in every way, not only showing more love and affection but also socializing more with their wives and understanding them better. (Wilcox does not mention the recent and widely publicized finding that evangelical wives have better sex lives with their husbands than religiously unaffiliated do with theirs, but it seems to follow that this would be so.) This, despite the fact that conservative Protestant households are more gender-traditional in terms of duties than others, with husbands performing less housework than husbands in other categories. Yet, as Wilcox points out, this doesn't seem to matter to their wives, because as sociologists before him have noted, marriages seem to function in an "economy of gratitude" in which the husband's expression of appreciation for his wife's work counts more than totting up who took out the garbage when. Schooled by organizations such as Focus on the Family, conservative Protestant men evidently appreciate their wives highly and find ways to communicate that appreciation.

Wilcox notes that soft patriarchs aren't just a phenomenon of conservative Protestantism, but are to be found these days in "traditional Catholic parishes, Mormon temples, and Orthodox synagogues." They can also be found (although not in the same abundance) in mainline Protestant churches, because those churches continue to foster family-friendly activities and because many individual mainliners are more theologically and socially conservative than their leadership. Wilcox's welcome study makes a strong case that accepting Jesus Christ as your personal savior—or making an equivalent commitment to an ancient and demanding faith—is the best predictor of marital and familial happiness to be found.

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The Right Wrongs

THE LESSER EVIL:
POLITICAL ETHICS
IN THE AGE OF TERROR
By MICHAEL IGNATIEFF
Princeton University Press
212 pp. $22.95.

Reviewed by
James Turner Johnson

Is it ever justifiable to do evil that good may come of it? Addressing the threat posed by terrorism, Michael Ignatieff answers Yes, with conditions. He argues that terrorists in our age threaten the destruction of democracy itself, with all the values that democracy embodies and protects, and that to combat this threat effectively, democracies may need to do acts that are evil in themselves but constitute a lesser evil than that posed by terrorism.

Hence *The Lesser Evil*, which is based on Ignatieff's 2003 Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh. His contribution to the growing list of books occasioned by the September 11 attacks and the global phenomenon of terror is an important one. He reflects carefully on the basic dilemma—that defending democracy and its rights and liberties may require an abrogation of at least some of those rights and liberties, at least for some persons and for a limited time—and he explicitly sets out to make a moral argument rather than the legal and political-theory arguments favored among critics of the war on terror. Yet, as I shall suggest below, his effort is marred by serious problems.

Ignatieff states straightforwardly his fundamental position—that a democracy may resort to lesser evils when faced with the greater evil of its own destruction—and proceeds to test it from several perspectives. First he examines whether the emergency abrogation of rights and liberties tends to preserve or endanger democracy; he concludes that limited abrogations, for the duration of an emergency, can serve to preserve while not posing a lasting danger. Yet he cautions that the historical record shows that democracies have been rather too ready to give up their essential rights and freedoms in the face of the challenge of terrorism, and he argues that to avoid this it is necessary to maintain a system of constitutional checks and balances and of open, adversarial challenge to uses of power.

Ignatieff next examines various types of terrorism and outlines distinct responses to each, proposing that some forms of terrorism can be effectively countered by a political response. He maintains, however, that the type of terrorism manifested in al-Qaeda's actions and affirmed in its public statements "aims at the death of politics itself," and thus such terrorism cannot be countered by political means but can be met only by war. And war, he clearly claims, entails the use of means that are evil—such means as coercion, force, and violence.

Given that war-making involves doing evil, the problem to which Ignatieff now turns is how to prevent these "lesser evils" of war from turning into greater evils. His probing historical and analytical examination of nihilism shows convincingly that a specific goal of terrorism is to get its targets to engage in terrorism themselves—to reduce the conflict to a contest between terrorisms. Such a corruption of the targeted society is rightly to be feared, says Ignatieff, and a democratic society is aided in defending itself against such corruption precisely by the institutions and procedures that it has designed to keep itself open and free. Thus a democratic society can find ways to craft forcible responses to terrorism that do not also lead to the loss of democracy.

In his last chapter, he considers the special dimension of the threat of "Armageddon," which would arrive if terrorists were to possess and possibly use weapons of mass destruction. Ignatieff lays out a reasoned and

JAMES TURNER JOHNSON *is Professor of Religion at Rutgers University and author, most recently, of* Morality and Contemporary Warfare *(1999).*

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impassioned argument for more robust engagement in the international order, calling specifically for "a renewal of democracy abroad." His argument is that the threat of terrorists using WMD challenges the stability of the international order itself and therefore must be met multilaterally. After considering several forms of such response, Ignatieff concludes by returning once again to the promise offered by democracy, arguing that the ultimate answer to terrorism must be persuasion: "We must be able to defend ourselves—with force of arms, but even more with force of argument. For arms without argument are used in vain."

Thus *The Lesser Evil* is, throughout, a defense of what Ignatieff understands to be the strength and superiority of democracy, both in itself as a form of government and also as a basis for dealing effectively with the threat of destruction posed by terrorism. It is the very strength of democracy, on his conception, that allows for a democratic society to undertake a limited use of lesser evils without losing its own soul.

This is powerful in its own way, even if it is not exactly novel. Michael Walzer's treatment of what he calls "supreme emergency" in *Just and Unjust Wars* proceeds along the same basic lines. Indeed, Martin Luther's conception of how political authority operates in the Kingdom of the Left Hand (that is, the world outside of the Kingdom of Christ) is similar in many ways. But to place at the core of one's moral paradigm, as Ignatieff does, an explicit permission to do a "lesser evil" should leave many readers uneasy.

The cause of this uneasiness becomes clearer if we question Ignatieff's argument at several points: the validity of the moral paradigm itself, the assumptions from which he proceeds, the inconsistencies in how he describes the limits to be observed in doing the "lesser evil," and his conclusions about specific elements of the war on terror.

The fundamental problem with Ignatieff's moral paradigm is his too-ready acceptance of the idea that it is sometimes right to do evil in the service of good. While he qualifies and conditions this in various ways, the basic point is still the same: that the good aimed at (defending democracy from terrorism) justifies the doing of evil (using means that involve violence, force, and coercion). He insists, beginning in the early pages of his book, that these means are genuinely evil. But does he clearly and sufficiently demonstrate that they are? He declares in his opening sentences that democracy seeks to make political life free from violence (that is, the sort of violence that terrorism inflicts) but that in order to defeat terror, a democracy may have to embrace violence.

But are these two examples of violence—that inflicted by terrorism on democracy and that used by democracy to fight terrorism—inherently equivalent? When Ignatieff quickly adds that in a liberal democracy *all* use of force is a lesser evil, something has, it seems to me, gone wildly astray. Not only is the initial equivalence between the two forms of violence wrong, but Ignatieff's position wrongly disconnects the use of force and coercion from the pursuit of justice. When used justly—and in the American system this means at its basis to protect the essential goods of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness at which American democracy aims—coercive force is not an evil at all but an instrument of good.

The assumption that all violence is inherently evil shows up in various ways throughout the book. One notable place is in Ignatieff's discussion of torture. He toys with the idea that for a liberal society to accept killing in war while not accepting tor-

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ture is inconsistent, then he rejects this idea, and then he qualifies his rejection, saying that distinguishing between torture and killing combatants in war "fails to capture the potential dangerousness of disarmed and helpless subjects." Because Ignatieff regards any and all violence as evil, he can only express his question in terms of relative evils (killing in combat or torture outside of combat). His ultimate answer is cast in terms of consequentialist moral reasoning, by which what counts as determinative in the moral argument is the outcome. Thus there is nothing inherently wrong with torture of captives that is not also inherently wrong with killing combatants. While Ignatieff in the end rejects torture, it is not at all clear, given this moral argument, why he does.

Ignatieff's moral paradigm requires that he favor the lesser evil over the greater, and the discussion of torture shows one way in which he resolves the question of what constitutes the lesser evil. Throughout the book, he attempts to set general limits on the evil that may be done, but in different places he defines the limits differently, and in no place does he offer a systematic moral justification for the various limits that he lists.

Early on, he writes that because the measures to be chosen are morally problematic, they must be strictly targeted, applied to the smallest possible number of people, used as last resort, and kept open for adversarial democratic scrutiny. Later (in the same chapter) he lists the following criteria: we must recognize that we are doing evil, we should act only out of demonstrable necessity, and only in last resort, and we must justify our actions publicly and submit to public judgment as to their correctness. When trying to show why terrorism is the greater evil, Ignatieff lists his limiting conditions in mirror-image form: terror makes violence a first resort, "target[s] unarmed civilians and punish[es] them for their allegiance or ethnicity," and seeks the death of politics itself. When he discusses preemptive war, he requires authorization "in conditions of genuinely democratic disclosure," a serious attempt to secure multilateral support, action only in last resort, and not leaving things worse than they were before the action was taken. Elsewhere he stresses the importance of public justification, and twice, using the Israeli Supreme Court as his reference, he offers that acts of "lesser evil" remain wrong but that the punishment properly entailed by them may be mitigated because of their good purpose.

These various statements of the limiting criteria differ from one another, and Ignatieff's readers must figure out for themselves where they come from, why these criteria and not others should be employed, and what it might mean in practice to design defenses against terror that involve evil actions whose punishment may be mitigated by the extreme circumstances.

Coming to this book with a bias toward an Augustinian conception of politics and toward the just war tradition, I remain deeply dissatisfied with Ignatieff's way of posing the problem. He elides the distinction between the protection of good political order and the protection of the state against harm, and he makes even the defense of democracy (which he clearly regards as good) a matter of a choice among evils. He nods in the direction of traditional just war criteria, but none of his lists of limiting conditions include all of these indispensable criteria. Most basically, by beginning with the notion that all violence is evil he insures that his major concerns focus on the *jus ad bellum* choice to use forceful or coercive means, not with

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what the *jus in bello* principles of discrimination and proportionality may tell us with regard to right conduct in the war on terror. And despite his effort to nuance and limit the means used in the anti-terrorist struggle, his moral paradigm casts this struggle as doing evil that good may come of it—a morally problematic idea.

Ignatieff has been a wise, informed, and engaged observer of the dimensions of the terrorist threat and of the war on terror; and there is merit in the thoroughness with which he identifies, analyzes, and works through many elements of the dilemma we face. His principal contribution in *The Lesser Evil* is his insistence that moral reflection should be at the center of the discussion about how to confront terror, but readers should not regard this as the last word in that discussion.

Let My People Go

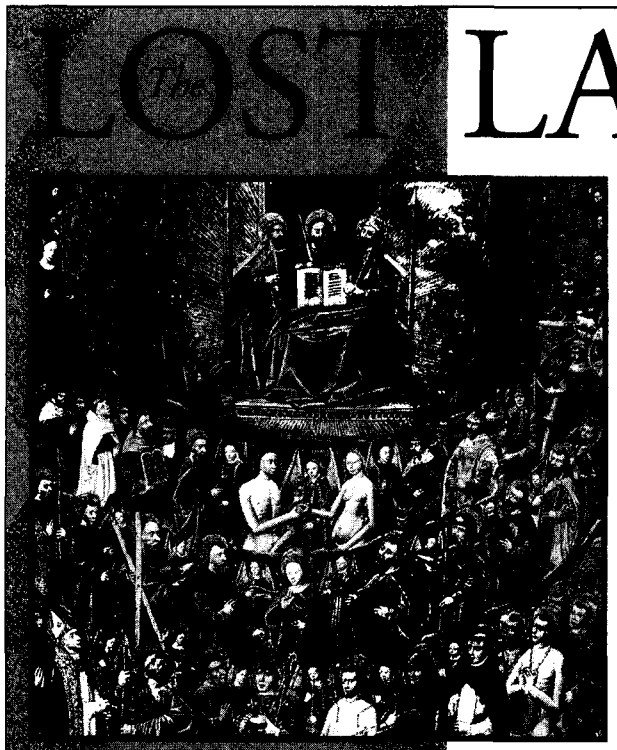
Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt: The Century-Long Struggle for Coptic Equality
By S. S. Hasan
Oxford University Press
320 pp. $49.95.

Reviewed by Robert W. Shaffern

Sana Hasan, an Egyptian scholar best known for her *Enemy in the Promised Land*, has written another important book in *Christians versus Muslims in Modern Egypt*—a book in which she honestly confronts the sorry condition of Christians in Egypt, where the "problems faced by the Christian minority are for many . . . a taboo subject." Hasan courageously describes the discrimination and harm often visited upon one of Christianity's oldest communions—the Coptic Church. Courage is certainly required in a world in which Islamic leaders frequently suggest that the victims of Muslim violence are themselves to blame for it. Among other things, Hasan's book is a welcome taboo-breaker.

The book has other merits as well. Though Hasan focuses on the past century in the life of the Copts, she capably fills in much Coptic history, which is too little known in the West. The Copts trace their traditions back to St. Mark the Evangelist and count among their luminaries such figures as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius, and Cyril of Alexandria. The tragic

Robert W. Shaffern *is Associate Professor of History at the University of Scranton.*



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isolation of the Copts began in 451, when a majority of Egyptian bishops, led by Patriarch Dioscoros of Alexandria, refused to accept the teaching of the Council of Chalcedon, which decreed that in the person of Christ there are two natures, one human and the other divine. Dioscoros and his supporters argued that Christ possessed only one nature. The Copts have been known ever since to the Chalcedonians as Monophysites (from *monos*, meaning "one," and *physis*, meaning "nature"). After Chalcedon, relations between the Copts and the Chalcedonians were often strained, and for two centuries well-intentioned religious and political leaders on both sides tried in vain to find some mutually acceptable teaching.

In the 640s, Muslim armies conquered Egypt, and ever since the Christians of the region have lived under Islamic rule. The work of Bat Ye'or (discussed in FT August/September 1997, February 1998, and May 2002) has shown that the idea of an Egypt where Christians and Muslims lived together in peace under the caliphs is a multicultural myth. So long as the majority of Egyptians were Copts, their Muslim overlords could not afford to persecute and alienate them. Copts were needed to staff the government bureaucracy, which the caliphs largely took over from the Byzantine government. After about three centuries Islam became the majority religion, and Muslims were free to vandalize churches, assault priests, and mock liturgies. Copts thus began their long, painful search for a peaceful place within their homeland. Alternately tolerated and persecuted, they were always *dhimmi* (second-class citizens).

EVENTS OF THE nineteenth century seemed to offer the Copts hope for a better future. Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1797 highlighted the weakness of the Ottoman sultanate and spread the doctrines of nationalism throughout Egypt. Influenced by these ideas, some Egyptians, such as the governor Muhammad Ali (1805-48), sought to create a state for themselves within the Ottoman orbit. Copts hoped that such a state—founded upon nationality rather than religion—would set them on an equal footing with Muslims. Ali wanted his regime to be a meritocracy, within which Coptic prospects would improve. Still, their traditional status as second-class citizens endured. The British occupation of

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Egypt, begun in 1882 to secure the shortest route between Great Britain and India, was also of small benefit to the Copts, since instead of cultivating good relations with fellow Christians, the British cynically courted the majority Muslims. Egyptian independence in 1922 merely aroused another round of nationalist hopes that were once again dashed by Muslim prejudice and jihadist violence.

In the twentieth century, Copts began to organize themselves to defy both the familiar persecution and new threats posed by modernity. The principal effort in this area was the Sunday School Movement, founded in 1918 by Habib Jirjal, an educated layman of the middle class, who decided that the political and religious movements then current in Egypt did not serve Coptic interests. Jirjal wanted Copts to rediscover, in the face of jihadist movements, not only their Christian traditions but also Egypt's pharaonic inheritance, of which Copts believed themselves to be the true stewards, because Coptic is the native tongue of Egypt. Jirjal was likewise convinced that Coptic survival demanded economic development and modernization, by which he meant much-improved education for a traditionally ignorant Coptic clergy. As an educated layman, he wanted to end the laity's subservience to a scandalously uneducated priesthood. Finally, Jirjal aimed to thwart the missionary work of occidental Christians, especially Protestants, whose disparagement of the ancient and beloved Coptic liturgy he found deeply offensive. To reach these goals it was felt that the best strategy was for the Copts to withdraw from Muslim Egypt and to preserve their religion, church, and way of life in a ghetto.

The leaders of the Sunday School Movement often differed as to the urgency of the movement's aims. Some, like Bishop Samuel, championed the ascetic models of the desert fathers. Advocates of economic modernization, such as Abbot Matthew "the Poor," sometimes found Samuel's preoccupation with third-century hermits obscurantist. In the person of Pope Shenouda (the Copts style the patriarch of Alexandria their "pope"), the movement struck its best balance.

After the Second World War, the Copts faced another series of challenges. Nasser's pan-Arabism seemed to leave the Copts (who tended to think of themselves as Egyptians, but not Arabs) out of his Egyptian nation. He also had a socialist's suspicion of all large, private institutions and organizations. Still, his crackdown on Egyptian jihadists aided the Copts by crippling their most consistent persecutors. Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, made more concessions to the jihadists, and violence against Christians broke out more often. The Egyptian government developed the habit—outrageous to decent men and women throughout the world—of ignoring attacks against the Copts, who rarely returned the violence. Jihadists assassinated Sadat in 1981, as the world well remembers, but they also assassinated Bishop Samuel in the same year.

HASAN BELIEVES that "the Copts have accepted molestation at the hands of Muslims with a resignation that borders on fatalism. Thirteen centuries of oppression have developed in them the traits of prudence and fearfulness." What Hasan characterizes as fatalism, however, might better be explained as perseverance in suffering, for the Copts have long praised the examples of their martyrs; indeed, the accession in 284 of the Emperor Diocletian, who staged the most thoroughgoing Roman persecution of the Christian church,

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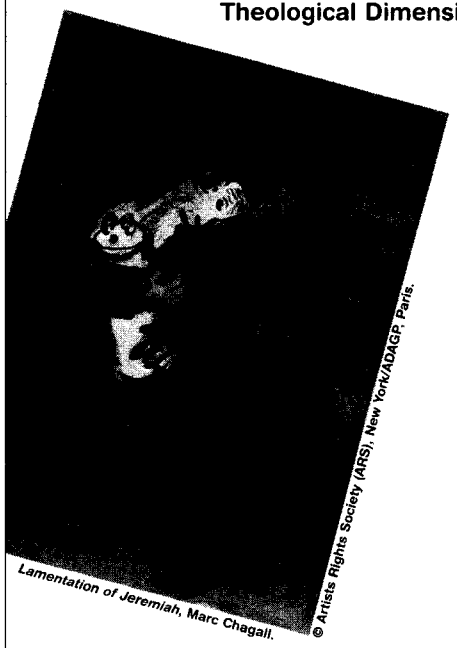
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marks the first year of the Coptic calendar.

Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, brutally drove the jihadists out of Egypt and thus once again reduced the number of atrocities committed against the Copts. Pope Shenouda III, who was consecrated in 1971, decided to make an ally out of Mubarak, and to work with him behind the scenes. Over time, however, the policies of Mubarak's government came to resemble Sadat's more closely, and the jihadists now enjoy much support among the Muslims of Egypt. Egyptian state-controlled media regularly broadcast the anti-Judaic and anti-Christian sermons that jihadist religious leaders preach on Fridays, and the history lessons in the state-controlled schools rarely mention the centuries when Egypt was a majority-Christian province of the caliph's empire. On the contrary, the books portray Christianity as a foreign, colonial implant in their Muslim country.

Though his alliance with Mubarak has grown increasingly tense, Shenouda III's pontificate has re-shaped the Coptic church. Prior to his reign, the church suffered from a long tradition of episcopal inertia. In the past, the Pope of Alexandria was merely the first among equals, and reform movements had foundered on the autonomy of Egypt's bishops. Shenouda in the past generation has centralized the church to reform it. He increased the number of dioceses and made sure that reformers, like himself, who had been formed as young men by the Sunday School Movement, received these new sees. Shenouda subjected monasteries, long immune from episcopal control, to his papacy. Administrative ability, as well as saintliness, now loomed larger in episcopal appointments. Each diocese established a bureaucracy to administer pastoral, educational, and charitable endeavors, as well as economic development projects. Many of the new bureaucrats were Western-educated laymen. In the past, Copts often complained about the length of their liturgies (sometimes up to three hours). Complaints are scarcer now, although many liturgies are longer because today's priests preach more often, especially on Sunday. The priests are now better educated, which makes them more effective preachers, and the laity eagerly and patiently heed their sermons.

Under Shenouda III, the Coptic church has also been more determined to reach out to children and teenagers. The temptation for young, ambitious, and educated Christians to convert to Islam for social and economic reasons is powerful, as Christians have little prospect of obtaining coveted positions in government and education, regardless of their credentials. These youngsters represent the future of Christianity in their country—a Christianity first preached in their land by the Apostles themselves.

HASAN'S NARRATIVES are far superior to her interpretations, which sometimes rely on odd historical parallels or inappropriate sociological models that impede, rather than enhance, her understanding of the plight of the Copts. She is not herself a Copt, and the reader may sometimes feel that she does not give sufficient weight to the religious motivations of the people she studies. Nonetheless, her remarkably vivid description of this enduring and beleaguered Christian community overcomes the book's shortcomings. Hasan is to be praised for this groundbreaking work, and anyone interested in oriental Christianity, as well as in questions of human rights and religious freedom, ought to read it.

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Chaplain of Shadows

Second Space
By Czeslaw Milosz
Translated by the author
and Robert Hass
Ecco. 102 pp. $23.95.

Reviewed by Matthew Boudway

Second Space is the final collection of poems by the great Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz, who died last August at the age of 93. A short book, it nevertheless finds room for all of Milosz's most important concerns and demonstrates the full range of his genius. Many of the poems collected here have a decidedly valedictory tone: they are not only poems written in old age—Milosz had been writing those for decades—but poems written at the end of life, *about* the end of life and whatever would follow it.

Like many poets of his time, Milosz often seemed to have more religious desire than faith, and more religious anxiety than desire. What made him slightly unusual was that he was never complacent about this. He admired and envied those who seemed to have greater faith, and among his intellectual and artistic heroes were many saints and mystics. He often took the part of Job, and sometimes took it further than Job did, honorably refusing what he regarded as theological evasions of the problem of suffering. But finally he had more in common with the man in the gospel who begs Christ for faith—"Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief" (Mark 9:24). Milosz uses a very similar formulation more than once in *Second Space*. In "Treatise on Theology" he confesses, "One day I believe, another I disbelieve," while in the long poem "Father Severinus," a doubting priest describes the people of his parish in the same way:

> To tell the truth, they believe and disbelieve.
> They go to church lest someone think they are godless.
> During the sermon they think of Julia's tits, of an elephant,
> Of the price of butter, and of New Guinea.
>
> He dared to think they might be like that
> That night when He knelt in the Garden of Olives
> And felt on His back the cold sweat of dread.

Milosz dared to think that he was like that too, and he sometimes

Matthew Boudway *is Managing Editor of* First Things.

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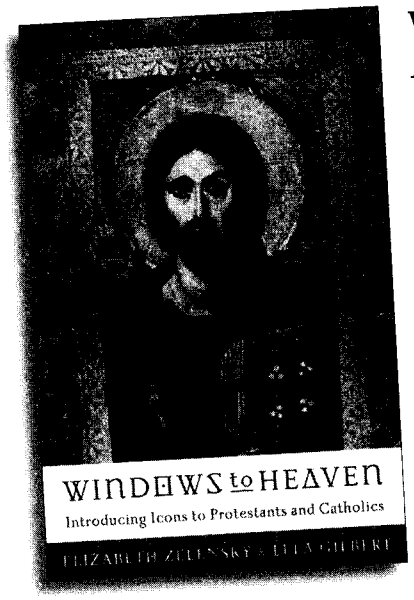

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dared to worry that it could have been otherwise: Could he have believed more, disbelieved less, if he had not been so proud? Had he allowed his literary ambition to keep him from the pursuit of sanctity? There is no clear answer to these questions in the poems. Or rather, there are several provisional and contradictory answers. Certainly, the poet was never bashful about his theological reservations—about his deep attraction to Gnosticism and his equally deep aversion to certain forms of scholasticism in which mystery seemed less the veil of divinity than a euphemism for unsolved problems. Milosz's description of such scholasticism could be uncharacteristically careless, but it did highlight his more considered disdain for those who held themselves above religious doubt. If, as he believed, it was dangerous to make a boast of one's doubts, it was still more dangerous to boast of one's certainty, as if it were a proof of personal virtue or the natural consequence of a well-maintained theological system.

Like his Father Severinus, Milosz remained dissatisfied with conventional theodicy:

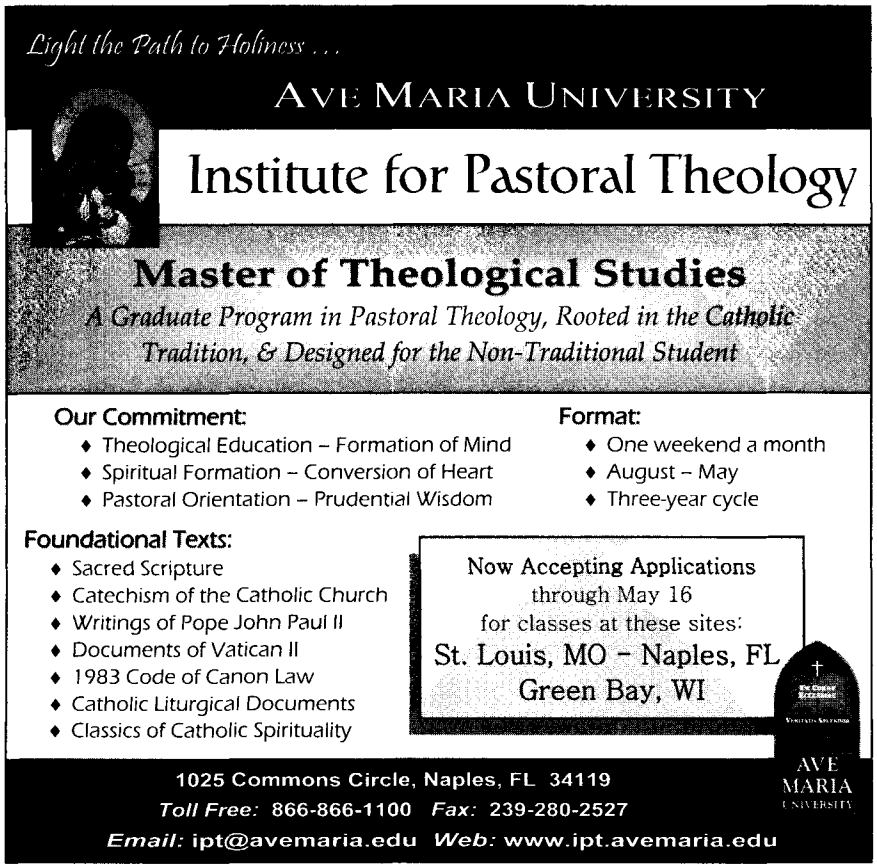
> It's beyond my understanding.
> How could you create such a world,
> Alien to the human heart, pitiless,
> In which monsters copulate, and death
> Is the numb guardian of time.

But unlike many of his contemporaries (and too many of his disciples), Milosz did not treat this dissatisfaction as a license to dismiss the claims of Christianity. He would have agreed with those dry scholastics that beauty is the splendor of being, and he would have added that sanctity is the splendor of faith. It was examples of sanctity more than arguments that drew him back to the Church whenever his metaphysical worries or his work pulled him away from it. So it is with Father Severinus: just when he fears that he has lost his faith and that "the torture inflicted on the Son of Man on the cross / Occurred so that the world could show its indifference," he thinks of a dying friend:

> The incurable illness of Theophilus.
> Too zealous in his piety.
> In his prayers God's mercy,
> His care and love, renews itself.
> I, watching the cruelty of his fate
> Or perhaps of a preordained destiny,
> Suffer. And I am deliberately
> hypocritical,
> For I want to save him from the loss of
> faith,
> To save all people like him. Out of pity
> for them
> Let us sing psalms, play music to
> Jehovah.
> From our hearts let the walls of a
> powerful fortress
> Rise around their believing hearts.
> I cannot grasp why, and whence comes
> My identity with them, perhaps divine?

MILOSZ WAS NOT an optimist. Yet he has been fairly described by both his religious and his secular admirers as a poet of hope. This may appear as a contradiction, but for him it was a kind of tautology. He believed that the natural tendency of history, like that of nature itself, is toward cruelty and dissolution. Accordingly, the human experience of history not only permits us to expect the worst but requires us to. That is precisely why there is room, and need, for hope. After all, if we could simply *expect* the best—or even a steady drift toward the better—then hope would be unnecessary and perhaps meaningless. Happily, our experience also provides us with consolations that are larger than what we can reasonably expect, larger even than history; and it is these consolations—instances of beauty and goodness—which invite us to hope. For Milosz, hope was not a disposition but a virtue, and a difficult one. In this sense at least, he was a deeply Christian poet.

But if it is fair to call Milosz a poet of hope, it is truer to call him a poet of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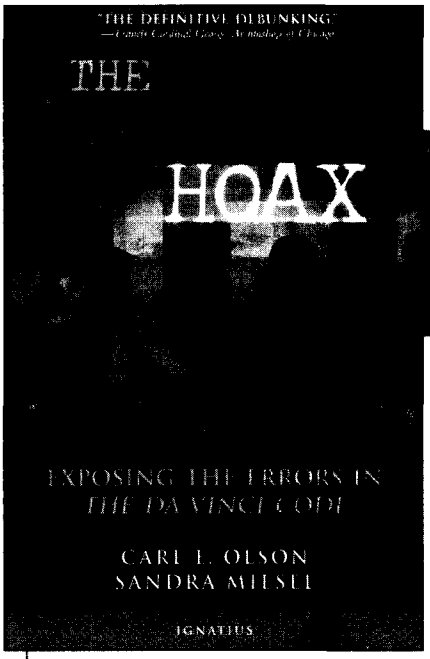
memory; in our time, he was perhaps *the* poet of memory. In *Second Space* Milosz examines the act of remembering under several of its aspects. It is, to begin with, a marvel and a blessing. At the end of his life, as he began to lose his vision and hearing, Milosz's sharp memory seemed to grow even sharper. "And the countries, cities, gardens, the bays of seas / assigned to my brush came closer, / ready now to be described better than they were before." Finally the excitements and distractions of youth fell away as he retired from the "fairgrounds of the world." He turned his gaze inward to reexamine all the images he had collected in the course of a long and varied life. And then he turned again, to consider the source of the one light that seemed to illuminate each of those images. "Without eyes, my gaze is fixed on one bright point, / That grows large and takes me in."

Memory was a mixed blessing, however, since it was also what burdened consciousness with a load of useless pain. The pains of the moment at least helped one to survive. But the old pains lodged in the mind were good for nothing: they became stagnant and septic. It was precisely this burden of memory that made it so difficult to hope; and the better one's memory, the harder it became. Milosz had seen a lot of ugliness—terrible violence in Poland during the Second World War, cowardice and mendacity in France after it—and he sometimes wished he could remember less. His famous strength of mind was also a serious vulnerability. "Such, simply, was my genetic inadaptation. // Here on earth every prick of a rose-thorn changed into a wound."

When Milosz was able to hope at all, he hoped his wounds would not be worthless. That is, he hoped that the Christian story was true and that the prospect of redemption was more than a useful self-deception. In *Second Space* he describes memory sometimes as a gift, more often as a wound, but always as a duty. The poet's job is to remember and record as much as he can, whether to celebrate or to mourn. "And no water / Could wash away what was branded in our memories. / And something had to be done with it. / Something had to be done." In a beautiful elegy titled "On Old Women," the poet uses a similar rhetorical repetition to fold the exercise of memory into the virtue of patience: "It had to be suffered, endured, managed. / One had to wait and not wait, one had to."

Milosz called himself a "chaplain



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of shadows." Again and again in this last book, he seeks to retrieve the stories of the forgotten dead, commemorating their mostly modest triumphs and protesting their disappearance. With W. H. Auden, Milosz believed that a poet's first responsibility is to praise "what there is for being," but, for him, this also meant praising what there was for having been, even if it meant exposing old wounds. As it usually did.

To praise. Only this has been left
To the one who ponders, slowly,
Misfortune upon misfortune and from
which side they struck.

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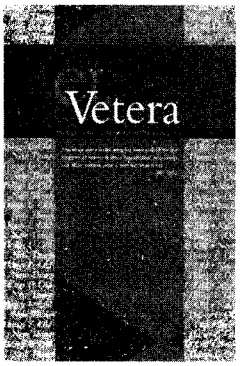

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By JAMES M. GUSTAFSON.
Fortress. 119 pp. $15 paper.

America's senior Protestant ethicist here gives us another volume that ought not to pass without due appreciation and due concern. In this collection of recent lectures James Gustafson continues his quest to make sense of the interaction between theology and the natural and social sciences. The main burden of the book is to analyze what criteria Christian theology and ethics should use in rejecting, absorbing, or accommodating theories and information from nontheological disciplines. Readers of Gustafson will not be surprised to find that he is anxious about the adequacy of Christian beliefs in the face of "confrontations" with biology and neuroscience. Gustafson is at his best when explaining different strategies that theology has used in clarifying (or obscuring) its relationship to the claims of secular knowledge. Things grow perplexing, however, when it becomes evident that Gustafson has about had it with theologians who have (he tells us) tried to escape from modernity by making theology impervious to secular critique. Gustafson has particularly in mind postliberal and postmodern theologians such as George Lindbeck, Stanley Hauerwas, and John Milbank, who have supposedly made a game of avoiding secular claims by arguing that Christian theology has its own privileged forms of reasoning and life. One wonders on what grounds Gustafson would allow any uniquely Christian claims to determine Christian theology. The chief effect of these portions of the book is to

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emphasize the growing gulf between what Christians are required to proclaim about God and what Gustafson now believes is intellectually permissible. In the end, the persuasiveness of the book will depend largely on whether the reader agrees with Gustafson that there is no avoiding the concerns and methods of liberal theology.

—Matthew Rose

Shaming the Devil: Essays in Truthtelling.
By Alan Jacobs.
Eerdmans. 231 pp. $20.

Books of literate and entertaining essays on occasional topics—what used to be called *belles-lettres*—are no longer common, and that is a shame. There's no better book to have on your end table or nightstand than a small volume of belletristic essays: they're easy on the arm, you can usually read an essay in less than thirty minutes, and when they're well done they have high literary virtues: concision, elegance, wit, and above all the ability to provoke thought made possible by a literary form in which a position can be stated and ornamented without being accompanied by imaginations and rebuttals of all possible objections. Seneca on renouncing busyness, Montaigne on cannibals, Charles Lamb on Mrs. Battle's opinions on the game of whist—these are classics of the genre from various ages. Among the best bellettrists of our day, worthy to be mentioned in company with Seneca, Montaigne, and Lamb (and to put him in company with the last is very high praise), is Alan Jacobs, professor of English at Wheaton College. *Shaming the Devil* is his second collection; his first, *A Visit to Vanity Fair*, was published in 2001. Both collections are deeply literary, profoundly (but not always overtly) Christian, and always a delight to read. The essays in *Shaming* are linked by the theme of truth and truth-telling, but that this ligature is loose can be seen from the range of topics treated: W. H. Auden, Albert Camus, Leon Kass on Genesis, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Iris Murdoch, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Jacobs' is one of the rare discussions of Rousseau that avoids both moral outrage and fawning admiration), Wole Soyinka (Jacobs offers an utterly convincing analysis of the frustrated anger so evident in Soyinka's recent work, and of the concomitant decay in its artistic power), and more. Jacobs has a deeply sacramental understanding of the nature of literary work, a delicate and careful way with other people's texts, and a style of his own that filigrees profundity with wit. Reading this book provides almost unalloyed pleasure, of the kind that comes from being in the close company of an intelligent, widely read, and unpretentious man who is able and willing to share his thoughts with you, to your invariable stimulation.

—Paul J. Griffiths

My Cup of Tea.
By Danielle Bean.
Pauline. 192 pp. $15.95 paper.

Although many excellent books have been published about the teaching of John Paul II on marriage and the family, excellent books about how to apply this teaching and put it into practice on

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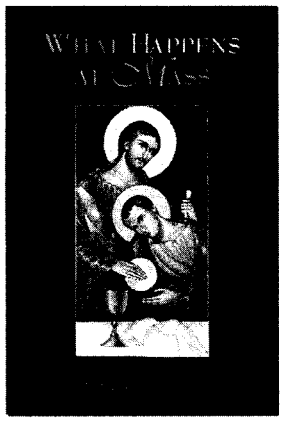

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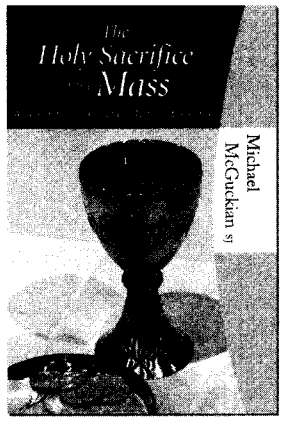

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a daily basis are more difficult to find. Enter Danielle Bean. She is not a theologian, and this book is not an elaboration on how the family is an icon of the Trinity. Rather, it is about what such lofty ideals imply in the daily struggles of raising a large family in a hostile world. Bean takes on the gamut of obstacles that a mother faces—everything from dirty diapers to terminal illness. But the book is not only for hard-pressed mothers who look for light or yearn for solidarity in their trials. Counselors and spiritual directors who sympathize with their plight will find solid and specific advice on how to console them. In her essays, Bean is conscious of God's superintending providence: she focuses on the positive side of the setbacks she faces, and manages to draw universal lessons from personal experience without ever being preachy. Her captivating style makes these edifying reflections a pleasure to read. What is perhaps most striking about *My Cup of Tea* is that the author has forgotten herself. Although she candidly admits her faults and is never boastful, it is clear that her life is not her own. Her joy and consolation is the joy and consolation of her children. It is this gift of self, which is at the center of John Paul II's teaching on marriage and the family, that this book will inspire its readers to attain.

—Josef Froula

SUMMER SCRIPTURE SEMINAR 2005

THE SPIRIT SPEAKS: YESTERDAY, TODAY, FOREVER

The Archdiocese of Chicago will convene the 32nd meeting of the Summer Scripture Seminar at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, IL on June 12-17, 2005. The seminar will reflect on the varied strands of contemporary Scripture scholarship, and explore the many ways the Spirit speaks to us..

Prof. Pauline Viviano
Interpreting the Bible in the Church over the Centuries

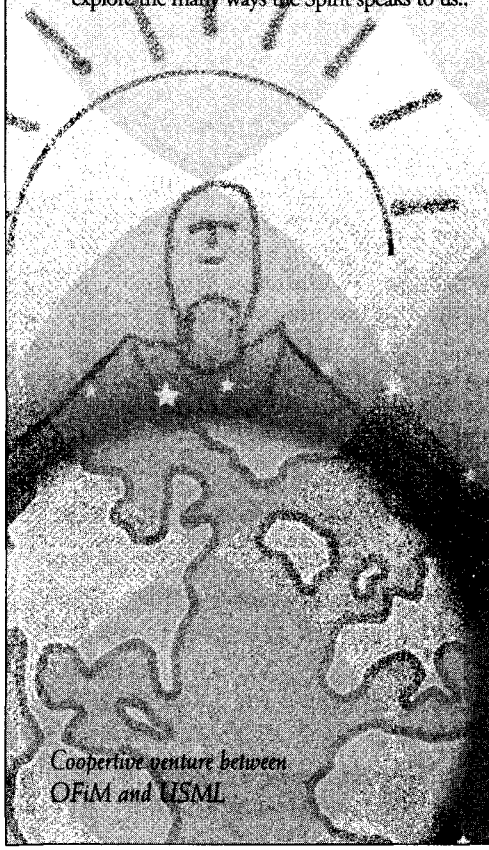
Rev. John Lodge
The Role of the Reader and the Meaning of Scripture

Prof. John J. Collins
The Old Testament in Postmodern Perspective

Rev. William Kurz, S.J.
Recovering Spiritual Interpretation of Scripture

Dr. Mary Deeley
Resident Scholar

The Seminar will include a panel discussion on The Future of Catholic Biblical Scholarship on the evening of Thursday, June 16th. Dr. Diane Bergant, C.S.A., Professor of Old Testament at Catholic Theological Union, and Dr. C. Colt Anderson, Assistant Professor of Church History at the University of St. Mary of the Lake will join Rev. William Kurz, S.J., and moderator Dr. Mary Deeley.



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FOUR CULTURES OF THE WEST.
By JOHN W. O'MALLEY.
Harvard University Press.
261 pp. $24.95.

Like all good historians John O'Malley, the distinguished historian of the Catholic Reformation, has always read far beyond his field of specialization. In this reflective work he summons up years of study of the history of Christianity and Western culture. This is a book about style, what O'Malley calls cultures: the different ways in which the great figures in Western history—philosophers, churchmen, writers, artists—sought to give form to the true, the good, and the beautiful. "*How* things were said," writes O'Malley, "was just as important as *what* was said." The cultures are four: prophecy and reform, illustrated by persons such as Isaiah, Paul, Tertullian, Luther; the academy and the professions, such as Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, the Académie Française, and Benjamin Franklin; poetry, rhetoric and the common good, such as Homer,

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Virgil, Cicero, Petrarch, and Erasmus; and art and performance, such as Phidias, Agia Sophia, Cluny, Michelangelo, and Palestrina. These are but a few of the persons and things that enliven his pages, but they illustrate that O'Malley's reach is wide. His comments are always informed and judicious, sometimes unexpected, and on occasion provocative. Indeed, one of the pleasures of the book is to debate with oneself some of his choices, to wonder why some are missing (where are Bach and Mozart?), to fill in the gaps from one's own reading, and in all to ponder afresh the grand tradition of life and thought that still animates our intellectual and spiritual life even amidst the lengthening shadows of our civilization.

—Robert Louis Wilken

C. S. Lewis's Dangerous Idea: In Defense of the Argument from Reason.
By Victor Reppert.
InterVarsity. 132 pp. $13 paper.

Judging them solely by their impact on the educated public, Blaise Pascal and C. S. Lewis must count as the two most effective apologists for the Christian religion in modern times. But to narrow the focus and judge them solely by their impact on professional philosophers, Pascal must count as the more effective. I say this not to denigrate Lewis or to praise Pascal's evident genius but merely to point out a fact of readership: that Lewis, perhaps because of his pleasantly accessible and avuncular style or maybe because he was a literary critic by profession and not a tenured philosopher, is often dismissed by philosophers as a lightweight. Victor Reppert begs to disagree. By carefully confronting Lewis' "argument from reason" (which states that logical arguments cannot be the result of brain events alone but are ultimately founded on the inexorable entailment of truth, or at least on the desire for it) with a whole array of arguments from Darwinian naturalists (who insist that mental events, including the logical operations of reason, are caused solely and sufficiently by the brain), Reppert not only shows the tenability of Lewis' argument against all comers but also demonstrates how much Lewis anticipated and refuted arguments that never seem to die out (as seen most recently in Daniel Dennett's *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, to which Reppert's essay serves as the obvious riposte). The only question that remains is why these arguments—which had appeared as early as the Sophists in ancient Athens and had already been effectively demolished by both Plato and Aristotle—still linger on. Surely the annoying recurrence of such obviously fallacious reasoning must be due to the pathos of the human condition. And for an analysis of the dynamic of *that* pathos I think we must still turn to Pascal as the better apologist.

—Edward T. Oakes, S.J.

Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis.
By Bat Ye'or.
Fairleigh Dickinson University Press. 384 pp. $23.95 paper.

Bat Ye'or is an Egyptian-born French scholar of Islam who has been in the forefront of those trying to awaken the West to the multiple threats posed by Islam. Her previous books, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam* and *Islam and Dhimmitude*, have received extensive attention in these pages (see FT August/September 1997, February 1998, May 2002). The term "Eurabia" was first used with a favorable connotation by Europeans in the early twentieth century who, inspired by a mix of fascist sympathies, anti-Semitism, and fear of American power, worked for the establishment of a French-led imperial hegemony in collusion with Islam. In Bat Ye'or's telling of the post–World War II story, Charles de Gaulle is the central villain and Jacques Chirac, who has stated that "Europe is as much Islamic as Christian," is the faithful heir to his legacy. The book provides copious documentation for the argument that there is a not-very-secret conspiracy between Europe and Arab states to oppose U.S. world influence and, most particularly, American support for Israel. Much deserved attention is paid to the reappearance of anti-Semitism in Europe, as well as to the ways in which churches in the Middle East, supported by those of Europe, are regressing to a Marcionite divorce of Christianity from its Jewish connections. (On the other side, there is an appendix with the Vatican's Walter Cardinal Kasper strongly affirming the indissoluble bonds between Judaism and Christianity.) Against the popular notion of "three Abrahamic faiths" in dialogue, Bat Ye'or contends that it is the unshakeable Muslim position that Islam is the true origin of both Judaism and Christianity (Abraham being the father of Ishmael, not Isaac). Bat Ye'or insists that Islam is unremittingly set upon conquest by jihad. As for what is to be done, the author ends on a note of strong support for the Bush administration's policies in the Middle East. The language of *Eurabia* is sometimes overheated, and there are curious omissions that might complicate the monothematic story, such as France's joining with Britain and Israel in the failed 1956 effort to control the Suez Canal. Nonetheless, the book supplies important information on many scores and will enlighten those who think that European hostility to the U.S. and Israel is a recent development dating from the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

SECULARIZATION DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN

"As society became more modern, it became more secular." That sentence has about it a certain "of courseness." It or its equivalent is to be found in numerous textbooks from grade school through graduate school. The connection between modernization and secularization is taken for granted. Christian Smith, professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina, challenges what everybody knows in an important new collection of essays by several sociologists and historians, *The Secular Revolution: Power, Interests, and Conflict in the Secularization of American Public Life* (University of California Press, 484 pp., $60). The challenge is not novel with Smith. Social scientists who had long propounded "secularization theory," Peter L. Berger very notably among them, have in recent years undergone a major change of mind. The contribution of Smith's big book is in his detailed analysis of the dubious (sometimes contrary to fact) assumptions underlying the theory, and in the case studies he and his colleagues present showing how various interest groups have employed the theory in the service of their own quest for power, usually at the expense of religion and religious institutions.

There are, writes Smith, seven crucial and related defects in conventional secularization theory. *Overabstraction*: the literature of the theorists routinely spoke of "differentiation," "autonomization," "privatization," and other abstract, if not abstruse, dynamics disengaged from concrete factors of social change such as interests, ideologies, institutions, and power conflicts. *Lack of human agency*: the theory was big on process without protagonists. It depicted secularization without secularizers. According to the theory, secularization just happens. *Overdeterministic inevitability*: "Religion's marginalization from public life is portrayed as a natural or inevitable process like cell mitosis or adolescent puberty." Secularization theory reflects a view of linear social evolution in the tradition of Comte and Spencer. "If there is one truth that history teaches us beyond doubt," wrote the great Durkheim, "it is that religion tends to embrace a smaller and smaller portion of social life." Any questions, class?

Idealist intellectual history: here the history of ideas is determinative. Owen Chadwick's *The Secularization of the European Mind* (note the focus on the mind) puts the primary explanatory emphasis on the philosophy of liberalism, evolutionary theory, Marxist ideology, and so forth. Smith writes, "Culture, philosophy, and intellectual systems certainly matter. But they cannot be abstracted from the real historical, social, political, legal, and institutional dynamics through which they worked and were worked upon." *Romanticized history*: there was in the view of secularization theorists an "age of faith"—for instance, the thirteenth century—which was succeeded and displaced by the age of reason and modernity. Then everything was religious; now everything, or at least everything that matters in public, is secular. Against that view, anthropologist Mary Douglas writes: "Secularization is often treated as a modern trend. But the contrast of secular with religious has nothing whatsoever to do with the contrast of modern with traditional or primitive. The idea that primitive man is by nature

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deeply religious is nonsense. The truth is that all of the varieties of skepticism, materialism, and spiritual fervor are found in the range of tribal societies. They vary as much from one another on these lines as any chosen segment of London life."

An overemphasis on religious self-destruction: Berger's 1967 *The Sacred Canopy* suggested that the Judeo-Christian tradition "carried the seeds of secularization within itself." Ancient Israel's monotheism began the secularization process by historicizing and rationalizing ethics, a process which Catholicism temporarily restrained but which the Protestant Reformation returned to full force in bringing about a "disenchanted" (Weber) world. A host of theorists agreed that the Reformation and the cultural exhaustion following the "wars of religion" hastened the process of secularization. While not discounting such claims entirely, Smith writes, "What most versions of secularization theory overlook is the important role played by other, nonreligious and antireligious actors in the process of secularization. At the very least, our analytical framework should include room to account for all the players who may have been involved in a process of change."

Seventh and finally, *underspecified causal mechanisms*: the influential Bryan Wilson, for example, simply asserted the incompatibility of modernity and religion: "The moral intimations of Christianity do not belong to a world ordered by conveyor belts, time-and-motion studies, and bureaucratic organizations. The very thought processes which these devices demand of men leave little place for the operation of the divine." One is reminded of the "demythologizing" New Testament scholar Rudolf Bultmann and his dictum that a man who knows how to work a light switch cannot believe in divine causality. Again, it was Berger who wrote very persuasively, thirty and more years ago, about the powerful linkage between "social structure" and consciousness. To all this Smith responds: "But sociologists and historians give too little attention to explaining exactly how and why these social changes had their supposed detrimental effects on religion. Exactly why did urbanization or technological developments have to undermine religious authority? Exactly how did industrialization and immigration work to produce religious privatization? Why should we treat these as some kind of 'great gears of history' that inexorably grind their way toward religious privatization? Rather than all nodding our scholarly heads together in what could be premature analytical closure, we need to go back and force ourselves to answer these questions again."

The seven defects specified by Smith in an older secularization theory—a theory, be it noted, still espoused by many—are sometimes overlapping, and one cannot lightly dismiss elements of truth, or at least of suggestiveness, in that older theory. But Smith is certainly right in warning against "premature analytical closure" and in directing our attention to other factors in the exclusion of religion from public life. He lists a number of questions calling for further exploration. Who, in fact, were the actors who agitated for a naked public square, and what were the grievances or desired benefits that drove their activism? What ideologies were employed, and what institutional and political circumstances favored their success? On what material resources did they draw, and how did they frame arguments in a manner that served their cause? What organizational structures provided them with an identity and moral community in furthering the secularization they sought?

Traditions and Delusions

Smith cites Edward Shils, who wrote that Western intellectuals have generally moved within one of four intellectual traditions: scientism, romanticism, apocalypticism, or populism. American intellectuals have worked mainly in the first two traditions. The meaning of scientism may seem self-evident, but Shils on the romantic tradition deserves a quotation at length:

> The romantic tradition appears at first sight to be in irreconcilable opposition to the tradition of scientism. . . . In many important respects, however, they share fundamental features. Romanticism starts with the appreciation of the spontaneous manifestations of the essence of concrete individuality. Hence, it values originality, i.e., the unique, that which is produced from the genius of the individual, in contrast with the stereotyped and traditional action of the philistine. . . . Institutions which have rules and which prescribe the conduct of the individual members by conventions and commands are likewise viewed as life-destroying. The bourgeois family, mercantile activity, the market, indeed civil society in general, with its curb on enthusiasm and its sober acceptance of obligation, are repugnant to the romantic tradition—all are the enemies of spontaneity and genuineness; they impose a role on the individual and do not permit him to be himself. The affinities of the romantic tradition to the revolutionary criticism of the established order are obvious. It, too [along with scientism], is one of the most explosive antiauthoritarian powers of modern intellectual life.

In the early twentieth century, the aggressive secularizers found an important ally in the leaders of liber-

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al Protestantism, says Smith. "Liberal Protestant clergy were important players in the secularization struggles. But the liberal Protestant capitulation was a *response to something*. It was a (not very successful) survival strategy in relation to an external challenge." The secularizing activists would, in time, dispense with their liberal Protestant allies when they were no longer needed in advancing the cause. William James foresaw the new circumstance in a speech to a college audience in 1907: "We alumni and alumnae of the colleges are the only permanent presence [in America] that corresponds to the aristocracy in older countries. We have continuous traditions, as they have; our motto, too, is *noblesse oblige*; and, unlike them, we stand for ideal interests solely, for we have no corporate selfishness and wield no powers of corruption. We ought to have our own class-consciousness. *Les Intellectuels*! What prouder club name could there be than this one?" Almost a century later, as incredible as it may seem, that is precisely how many in the academy see themselves.

As I have had occasion to write elsewhere, even as liberal Protestantism was capitulating to the secularizers, it exhibited an overweening self-confidence about its cultural hegemony. Smith provides delicious quotes. Methodist Bishop Edward Thompson in 1870 told an audience that he foresaw in the not-too-distant future an America that would be "without an adulterer, or a swearer, or a Sabbath-breaker, or an ingrate, or an apostate, or a backslider, or a slanderer; hundreds of thousands of homes without a prodigal, a quarrel or heartburn, or a bitter tear." Thirty years later, the head of the American Board for Foreign Missions declared that "Christianity is the religion of the dominant nations of the earth. Nor is it rash to prophesy that in due time it will be the only religion in the world." Northern Baptist leader Samuel Batten wrote in 1909 that, of the three "great facts" of modern society—Christianity, the state, and democracy—Christianity was "the most potent force in our modern civilization." And so it went. Even as aggressive secularizers were bringing the public potency of religion down around their ears, religious leaders were incapable of seeing what was happening. As I have also had occasion to write, in an exercise of cultural catch-up not a few Catholic leaders today seem incapable of understanding what is happening to Catholicism in this country. With serene self-confidence, they speak of making progressive accommodations as they progressively capitulate. But that is a story for another time.

In framing the public argument, says Smith, the secularizers succeeded brilliantly in defining religion as "sectarian." "Having once been a tool in the hands of dominant Protestants to exclude versions of faith that did not serve their purposes, the term *sectarian* was commandeered by rising secularizers to expurgate religion *per se* from the public sphere." In the past half century, one notes, the term "sectarian" has been regularly used by the courts to that end. The late John Rawls prescribed that "comprehensive accounts" of reality—e.g., religious accounts—are disqualified as legitimate "public discourse." They are sectarian. Smith usefully describes how corporate capitalism and its related philanthropies were, in the first part of the twentieth century, employed very overtly to exclude religious institutions of higher education and to exclude religion from those that were not expressly religious. This supplements the thesis of James Burtchaell's masterful *The Dying of the Light*, in which he carefully documents the often subtle ways in which religious leadership surrendered colleges and universities to secularist orthodoxy.

Revolutions and Counterrevolutions

The Secular Revolution includes chapters by various authors on the success of the secularizers in public schools, in turning back the politics of moral reform, in shaping jurisprudence, and in the ascendancy of a self-consciously secular media. On the last, Richard Flory nicely documents the ways in which journalistic "professionalization" went hand in hand with secularization. According to the doctrine of the professionalizers, journalism was uniquely essential to civilization; the evolution from primitive to professional journalism was inevitable; journalism was the "educator" of the masses; religion was reduced to morality and ethics, and all religions were to be treated equally; professional journalism was the functional equivalent of and successor to religion. As Flory shows, journalists were very explicitly instructed in these doctrines, and he illustrates the effectiveness of the instruction in the treatment of religion in the *New York Times* over the past century.

The several chapters are of uneven quality, some claiming to prove too much and others missing obvious instances that support their argument. Not all the other authors are as astute as Christian Smith in recognizing that the secularizing activists did have legitimate grievances against the liberal Protestant hegemony. My impression is that Smith understands that this "revolution," like most revolutions, sometimes had commendable goals which were perverted by the obtuseness of the establishment against which it was revolting.

The Secular Revolution is of great value for two reasons. It effectively debunks secularization theories based upon abstract and impersonal forces that pre-

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sumably make the triumph of secularism inevitable. And it restores the human dimension of secularization. It returns the subject of secularization to history, with all its conflicts, rivalries, ambitions, grievances, and political strategies. Secularization did not just happen. The naked public square was not predetermined. The naked public square is precisely what many people in positions of influence wanted, and it is what they largely achieved. Successful revolutions are vulnerable to, and sometimes provoke, counterrevolutions. Whether the counterrevolution is now underway is also a question for another time.

FT

SPEAKING ABOUT THE UNSPEAKABLE

Don't talk about it. The more we talk about it, the more we make it seem normal. That is one view of the matter. The subject is torture. It is a subject that keeps cropping up in the news in connection with U.S. treatment of prisoners in Iraq and Guantanamo. Then there is the practice of "renditions" in which the CIA apparently sends suspected terrorists to countries that are not so squeamish about the techniques of "enhanced interrogation." They, it is reported, do the dirty work for us. Alan Dershowitz of Harvard Law School kicked off a new discussion of torture by advocating that it be brought under legal jurisdiction by requiring a bench warrant for torturing suspects in extraordinary circumstances. Dershowitz is not advocating torture. He simply notes that it is practiced in the great majority of countries of the world, and he is proposing a way by which he thinks the practice could be reduced by careful regulation.

Now Sanford Levinson who teaches law at the University of Texas has edited a book from Oxford University Press, *Torture*, with sixteen reflections on the subject. They range from the don't-talk-about-it school to the talk-about-it-only-to-condemn-it view, to a variety of discussions of when torture is permissible and impermissible. The book includes an older essay by Princeton's Michael Walzer advancing the inescapable connection between political action and "dirty hands." The essay reflects an un-Jewish skepticism about the reach of morality and law; indeed it is almost Lutheran in its view of *simul iustus et peccator*, popularly translated into the maxim, "Sin boldly." Among the more interesting contributions is one by Richard Posner of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and Senior Lecturer at the University of Chicago Law School. Posner notes that "torture" lacks a clear definition in international agreements and American law. "Almost all official interrogation is coercive, yet not all coercive interrogation would be called 'torture' by any competent user of the English language, so that what is involved in using the word is picking out the point along a continuum at which the observer's queasiness turns to revulsion."

There is also, one notes, a continuum of circumstances in which most people, rightly or wrongly, would make an exception to the general prohibition of torture. The most commonly cited exception is that of "the ticking bomb" in which there is reason to believe that a suspect knows the location of a nuclear weapon planted in a large city which, if it explodes, will kill thousands of people. In this book and elsewhere, almost all the parties to this discussion feel compelled to address "the ticking bomb" circumstance. Posner says he agrees with Dershowitz that "if the stakes are high enough, torture is permissible." He adds, "No one who doubts that should be in a position of responsibility." He suggests that Dershowitz is naïve, however, in thinking that the involvement of judges and warrants would not quickly become corrupted, resulting in the routinizing of an odious practice.

A Law of Necessity

Posner draws a comparison with Lincoln's unconstitutional suspension of habeas corpus during the Civil War. "Lincoln did it anyway and was probably right to do so—the Union was in desperate straits, and its survival was more important than complying with every provision of the Constitution, since, had the rebellion succeeded, the Constitution would have gone by the boards. It does not follow that the Constitution should be amended to authorize the president to suspend habeas corpus; for he might be inclined to test the scope of that authority." It is important, says Posner, that Lincoln knew that what he was doing was illegal. The comparison is weakened, however, because Lincoln's circumstance was sui generis, while the practice of torture is widespread and ongoing. In these discussions, reference is frequently made to Israeli laws aimed at prohibiting torture in the interrogation of terrorist suspects. The regulations distinguishing legitimate interrogation techniques from torture are quite precise, but allowance is made for *ex post facto* pardons in the use of torture when the appeal is to "the law of necessity." We are again back to the ticking bomb scenario.

In all this, I am struck by the paucity of serious discussions by Christian moral theologians and ethicists. In these pages I have said, "We dare not trust ourselves

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to torture." I believe that but acknowledge that it is not sufficient. How do we address these questions of what in fact is happening in circumstances in which conscientious Christians seek moral guidance, and how can we do this without falling into the pits of relativism, proportionalism, consequentialism, and related errors? In the ticking bomb instance, does the duty to protect thousands of innocents override the duty not to torture? There is a related development that has also not received the attention it would seem to deserve. It is a generally accepted moral maxim that it is always wrong to deliberately take innocent human life. Yet after September 11 it is the policy of our government to shoot down hijacked airplanes, thus killing the innocent passengers, if there is reason to believe that, as in the case of the World Trade Center, the hijackers intend to use the plane as a weapon. One can, of course, stretch the rule of "double effect"—the distinction between what is directly willed and what is only indirectly willed—but it is a stretch that teeters on the edge of simplistic intentionalism.

The instance of hijacked planes is relatively rare; the instance of torture is common, and, it would seem, becoming more common. Christian ethicists have in recent years moved away from "quandary ethics" to "virtue ethics," and that is in many ways a good thing. But quandaries persist. Casuistry has a bad reputation, but the careful study of cases and the moral rules that apply to them is inevitably part of serious moral reflection. I, too, earnestly wish that we could not talk about torture. But the reality and the discussion of the reality will not go away. One cannot help but think that the discussion would benefit from the contributions of Christian and Jewish thinkers informed by the wisdom of biblical sources and their own traditions.

FT

HELPING TROUBLED ADOLESCENTS

In 2003 *City Journal*, the influential publication of the Manhattan Institute, ran a much-discussed article on the widespread promotion (promotion is the necessary word) of homosexuality in public schools (see Marjorie King, "Queering the Schools," Spring 2003). Pro-gay advocacy is of course advanced in the name of inclusiveness and justice. That this problem is not limited to public schools is evident in "Gay Adolescents in Catholic Schools," a long two-part article in *Momentum*, the official publication of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), by Father Robert Mattingly, S.J., of Gonzaga College High School in Washington, D.C.

That some adolescents in Catholic schools experience homosexual desires and that this is frequently the occasion of confusion and pain cannot be denied. The confusion and pain are no doubt very real and deserve honest discussion among educators. Such students are entitled to caring attention by teachers and counselors. Fr. Mattingly's analysis and recommendations, however, follow the line of gay advocacy organizations that have in recent years exercised such a great influence in our culture. Along the way, he seriously misrepresents the Church's teaching on homosexuality. He writes: "In 1986 the Church described homosexuality as 'intrinsically disordered' (CDF, *Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons*). Phrases such as this may not sound pleasing to the ear, but must be seen as precise philosophical terms. The term 'intrinsic' confirms that this orientation is not chosen and that it is not changeable (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p. 566)." Wrong. In fact, the statement of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) says "homosexual acts" are "intrinsically disordered." The precise meaning of "intrinsic" is that the act is wrong in itself, quite apart from context, intention, or consequence. Nowhere in Catholic teaching—not in the CDF statement, nor in the *Catechism*, nor even in the much controverted and subsequently amended 1997 statement of the U.S. bishops, "Always Our Children"—is it taught that homosexual desires are unchangeable or represent, as Mattingly says, an "inborn disposition." (The pertinent sections of the *Catechism* unfortunately misrepresented by Fr. Mattingly are §§ 2357-2359.) Nor, it should be added, are Fr. Mattingly's claims warranted by scientific evidence.

Throughout his article, the author confuses homosexual desire with a gay "identity" that is to be publicly asserted and affirmed. His elaborate footnotes draw heavily and uncritically on "gay-friendly" research and advocacy literature. He stresses that gay adolescents need gay friends and suggests that, at least at first, such relationships not be sexual. "This is not to say," he adds, "that research holds that sexual relationships are always unhelpful, but if they occur they should come after the establishment of self-esteem-building friendships." "This position," he asserts, "does not contradict church teaching." Church teaching, by way of sharpest contrast, is this: "Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection" (*Catechism* § 2359).

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Mattingly acknowledges the perils encountered by gay adolescents and cites familiar findings: the suicide rate is five times higher for such adolescents; their suicide attempts are much more lethal; 40 percent of homeless teens are homosexual, many of them engaged in prostitution; homosexual teens are three times as likely to engage in alcohol and drug abuse, and account for 60 percent of new HIV cases among fifteen-to-twenty-four-year-olds. Why is the gay life so grim? Without a hint of nuance, Mattingly asserts the standard line: "Self-destructive behaviors are not intrinsic to being homosexual but they flow from the external negative reaction to it, which then becomes internalized." In other words, whatever is wrong with homosexuality is the fault of those who think there is something wrong with homosexuality.

There is nothing original in Fr. Mattingly's article. The arguments advanced and research cited are those to be found in the literature and on the websites of dozens of advocacy organizations. Except, of course, for the claim that the viewpoint is consistent with Catholic teaching, although that, too, is standard in gay-friendly Catholic advocacy. The noteworthy thing is that this position is promoted in the official journal of the NCEA. Adolescents caught up in the ambiguities of sexual desire need loving guidance and support—and clear moral teaching. It is an extreme act of cruelty to teach an adolescent boy or girl that one's disordered desires define one's identity, and thereby encourage young people to enter a grim gay world in the hope that, if enough do so, it will somehow abolish "the external negative reaction" to homosexuality.

This is a sure way to place children at risk in a sociological gamble that will almost certainly fail. To be sure, people have become more "accepting," or at least less publicly censorious, of homosexuals and homosexuality in recent years. But it is true of almost all parents that they do not want their children to be gay, and they do not want teachers encouraging them to assume a gay identity. That will almost certainly not change, and for very good reasons, including their conviction that homosexual acts are morally wrong, the hope that their children will be spared the miseries attending a gay lifestyle, and their desire for grandchildren. The second part of Fr. Mattingly's article offers practical suggestions for creating a gay-friendly school. They are, in effect, suggestions for doing an end run around parents, clergy, and counselors who may not have an "appropriate" attitude toward homosexuality. (The issue of *Momentum* in which the second part of the article appears carries, oddly enough, another long article on "accountability" in Catholic education.) The editors appear to recognize that the Mattingly article is provocative and they invite responses from readers. Provocations can play an important part in stimulating discussions. Mendacity, however, is not a legitimate form of provocation. Fr. Mattingly's article, in its misrepresentation both of the homosexual condition and of the Church's teaching, is a deeply misleading exercise in advocacy. Catholic educators, one would like to think, place a high premium on honesty.

FT

THE CHURCH IN WORLD POLITICS

The Merton Lecture at Columbia University honors Thomas Merton, the monk-poet best remembered for *The Seven Storey Mountain*, the account of his discovery of Christ and the Church. This year the Merton Lecture was given by Archbishop Celestino Migliore, who is the Holy See's representative, or nuncio, to the United Nations. His lecture is titled "The Catholic Church and International Politics in the Twenty-First Century." Migliore noted that the Holy See currently has formally accredited diplomatic representation with 174 of the 191 member states of the UN, and underscored that such representation "personifies the government of the pope." Therein lies an interesting little story.

When the UN was formed after World War II, a number of states had the status of "permanent observer." One by one they became member states until only Switzerland and the Holy See were left. When Switzerland became a member state, there was fear in Rome that, as the only remaining permanent observer, the Holy See might be in a weakened position. Indeed, an unsuccessful effort was made, led by pro-abortion groups in the U.S., to terminate the Holy See's representation at the U.N. In Rome, consideration was given to changing the relationship by having the tiny Vatican City become a member state. After widespread consultation, that idea was rejected, and last July the Holy See and the UN refined and ratified the now unique status as permanent observer.

This arrangement, the Archbishop noted, is in continuity with the beginnings of the Holy See's diplomatic activity when, in the fourth century, the imperial government was moved to Constantinople and it was necessary for the pope to protect the interests of the Church by having a *nuntius,* or messenger, at the imperial court. So today the nuncios represent the Holy See, meaning the pope, and not Vatican City, which is, as Migliore says, simply "a base from which to exercise his sovereignty over the Catholic Church, independent and autonomous of any earthly authority." The diplo-

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matic activity has been growing. When John Paul II became pope in 1978, the Holy See was accredited to only eighty states. The purpose of such diplomacy is, of course, to represent the interests of the Catholic Church in various countries, but also, increasingly, to be an advocate for human rights—most particularly, for religious freedom for all believers, Rome being rightly convinced that religious freedom is the most important foundation of all human, civil, and political rights.

Ambitious Goals

Although lacking economic or military power, Migliore notes, the Holy See is energetically engaged in helping to resolve problems among nations and working for international "solidarity." He recalled Stalin's scornful question, "How many divisions does the Pope have?" The answer was given decades later when, beginning with Poland, the moral authority of John Paul II was crucial to the dismantling of what Ronald Reagan called "the evil empire." Today, Migliore said, stealing a phrase from George W. Bush, "faith-based" diplomacy is more and more important in a world in which religion and morality are increasingly assertive in politics among nations. He also describes this as "track-two diplomacy," in which the Holy See seeks to guide the development of globalization and work against the resort to war.

Market economics and globalization are facts of life; the question is what this means for the peoples of the world, and especially the millions upon millions who are poor. Migliore said: "In the early 1990s, the Pope affirmed in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus* that, after the fall of communism, it was not enough to say that the opposite system, capitalism, had won and had proven itself to be a better system. Instead, John Paul expressed the hope that capitalism could reform itself and urged that it be remodeled into a socio-economic market based on an ethical-political synthesis of human rights and duties. He proposed a new, universal social contract based on a strong ethic of solidarity. . . . The *leitmotif* of the Pope's vision of globalization is that it needs to be governed."

As for war, the Holy See favors "a presupposition in favor of nonviolent alternatives." Migliore elaborates: "It is in this sense that the Pope is faithful to the inspiration that comes from the Word of God, from tradition, and from the Church's social teaching, and stays above any dangerous ambiguity or pacificism-at-all-costs attitude. At the same time, however, Pope John Paul II insists that the world needs a new international order that lessens the need for war as a solution for disputes, with the final goal of making war useless and outmoded."

These ambitious goals are not without their conceptual and practical difficulties. Many scholars read *Centesimus Annus* in a way much more sympathetic to market economies than Archbishop Migliore suggests. The accent of the encyclical is on expanding the circle of productivity and exchange, not on establishing a "social market," which is a phrase favored by democratic socialists in Europe and elsewhere. And one cannot help but wonder if it is helpful to say that globalization "needs to be governed," if that means that market exchanges are to be governed by individual states or states acting collectively. A governed economy is at least in tension with the free economy so strongly affirmed by *Centesimus Annus*. If, on the other hand, the Archbishop means to say that economic decisions are very often also moral decisions, and that those making such decisions are morally responsible for their consequences, it is a quite different matter. That is a truth clearly grounded in *Centesimus Annus* and the entirety of the Church's social doctrine. The World Trade Organization, for instance, in which the Holy See participates, may be seen as a form of economic governing, but it is governing aimed precisely at enhancing the freedom of the market economy.

Migliore affirms "the final goal of making war useless and outmoded." That is an interesting formulation. In October 1965, Paul VI declared to the UN general assembly, "No more war, war never again," and John Paul II has said that war is always "a defeat for humanity." It is difficult to disagree with such sentiments, but some contend that Catholic social doctrine is moving toward a position of pacifism, if not, as Migliore says, "pacifism-at-all-costs." Rome's opposition to the Gulf War of 1991 and to the current action of the American-led coalition in Iraq is well known. The reasons for that opposition have been muddied by the anti-American tone of statements by some curial officials. It would seem that the Catholic Church cannot become pacifist of any sort without repudiating 1,500 years of doctrine regarding just and unjust warfare, and the "rule of faith" by which the Church is governed would seem to preclude the possibility of any such repudiation.

Just war, as carefully defined by the tradition, is understood as an instrument of statecraft. It is very hard to know what is meant by "the final goal of making war useless and outmoded." It is not "useless" so long as states deem war, whether just or unjust, useful to achieving their ends. And it is not "outmoded" so long as it is the modality chosen to achieve such ends. In short, war will not be useless and outmoded until coercion, including military coercion, is no longer a factor in world politics. In 1991, Saddam Hussein deemed it useful to his purposes to seize Kuwait and

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assert his dominance in the Middle East. Other nations deemed it very useful, indeed imperative, to foil his ambitions. Likewise in the case of Hitler, Mussolini, Hirohito, Chairman Mao in Korea, the current regime in Sudan, and hundreds of lesser aggressors in the last half century. Certainly war is to be avoided if morally possible, and certainly the Church must strive to ameliorate the evil to which human beings are prone, and certainly the Church must proclaim the promise of the Peaceable Kingdom in which nations "learn war no more." But to adopt, even as a goal, the proposition that war should be judged "useless and outmoded" is, in history short of that Kingdom, to reinforce a pacifist sentiment that weakens the resolve to resist evil and redress injustice, if necessary by resort to just war.

As to a new international order, Archbishop Migliore is a representative to the UN and so it may be assumed he has that institution very much in mind. In the Merton Lecture and elsewhere he speaks of the need for a reformed and restructured UN. At this time, and not only because of the Food-for-Oil scandal involving billions of dollars in smuggling and bribery, the UN is held in very low esteem, and not only in this country. Although here, for the first time in many years, influential voices are urging that the UN should be allowed to go the way of the League of Nations. It is generally admitted that the UN is corrupt and ineffectual. Even UN-sponsored studies do not attempt to deny that. In thinking about international order, it is not sufficient to speak in rather vague terms of human solidarity. Human solidarity is a moral truth to which the Church must bear witness. But "international order" suggests an institutional embodiment of that solidarity. If such an embodiment is to be consonant with the freedom that the Church teaches is essential to human dignity, it must not stifle the sometimes disorderly variety of cultural, political, and economic dynamics essential to human creativity. More specifically, Catholic teaching must address the continuing role of the nation-state and national sovereignty in securing human goods. One curial prelate, assuming the sovereignty of the UN over that of nation-states, repeatedly asserts, "The force of law, not the law of force." That is a slogan, not an argument.

The ideas set forth in the Merton Lecture are deserving of close attention. Archbishop Migliore is a man of great intelligence and devotion, and is, not incidentally, a very affable interlocutor. The diplomatic corps of the Holy See renders important service in protecting the interests of the Church, coordinating humanitarian assistance, and advancing human rights, especially religious freedom, around the world. It is good that the permanent observer status of the Holy See at the UN has been clarified and secured. If, however, pronouncements on economics, globalization, war and peace, and international order are to rise to the dignity associated with doctrine, much more scholarly work and much more deliberation, along with much more time, will be required. Generalized dispositions, sentiments, intuitions, and even slogans in reaction to controverted current events do not constitute the mind of the Church, and are less than helpful to the many Catholics who devoutly desire *sentire cum ecclesia*—to think with the Church.

WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ There are these advertisements in the *Times Literary Supplement* for T-shirts inscribed with the words of those described as the wise men. Albert Camus, for instance: "All that I know most surely about morality and obligations, I owe to football." Followed by Jean-Paul Sartre: "In football everything is complicated by the presence of the opposite team." I suppose, although at the moment I have neither time nor inclination to check it out, that the latter may be related to "Hell is other people." Camus, by way of contrast, was, all in all, a wise man.

■ "Follow your conscience." Too often that counsel is understood to mean that we're free to do what we want to do. Conscience, however, is a gift of God for discerning the truth, and the truth is to be obeyed. This is among a host of questions concisely and winsomely addressed by Bishop Samuel Aquila of Fargo, North Dakota, in a pastoral letter, "You Will Know the Truth and the Truth Will Set You Free." The letter includes this: "I urge the clergy, catechists, and laity of the Diocese of Fargo to read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to understand the true meaning of conscience. In order to facilitate this understanding, I am mandating today that every priest or deacon who preaches on the first two Sundays in Lent of 2005 is to present a catechetical homily on conscience. The section on conscience of the *Catechism* is to be distributed to every Catholic in the pew on the First Sunday of Lent. Homily outlines will be provided to the clergy to assist them in their preparation." One hopes that other bishops may pick up on this. It is not necessary to wait until next Lent.

■ Facing a barrage of pro-gay advocacy ranging in subtlety from the seductive to the sledgehammer, readers ask about books that critically engage the conventional views while offering alternative perspectives.

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Here are a few recommended by knowledgeable people. *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* (Abingdon) by Robert Gagnon of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is a thorough and widely respected study. *Homosexuality and American Public Life*, edited by Christopher Wolfe (Spence), addresses the cultural and political dimensions of gay advocacy. *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth* by Jeffrey Satinover (Baker) is a psychiatrist's incisive critique. *The Truth About Homosexuality* (Ignatius) is by John F. Harvey, the priest founder of "Courage," an organization that helps people with same-sex attractions to live chastely. There is also *A Parent's Guide to Preventing Homosexuality* (InterVarsity) by Joseph and Linda Nicolosi, a couple who have had extensive experience in working with children and parents. *Straight and Narrow?* (InterVarsity) by Thomas E. Schmidt reflects an informed evangelical Protestant perspective. Also of continuing pertinence, I should like to think, is the statement of the Ramsey Colloquium, "The Homosexual Movement" (FT March 1994).

■ When at the Second Vatican Council *subsistit in* replaced the former *est*, the Catholic Church made a decisive and irrevocable commitment to the quest for full communion among all Christians. This is a point underscored by Walter Cardinal Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, at a conference marking the fortieth anniversary of the Council's decree on ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*). The Church of Jesus Christ subsists in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is not simply, exclusively, and without remainder the Church of Jesus Christ. Already in the 1943 encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, it was recognized that there are those who are not baptized but yet belong to the Catholic Church by their desire to belong. This was commonly called "baptism by desire." In the 1940s, Father Leonard Feeney of Boston precipitated a famous controversy by insisting that *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the Church no salvation) means that only Catholics could be saved. His interpretation of that venerable formulation was explicitly rejected by the Holy See in 1949, and Feeney's persistence in his error later led to his excommunication. In his address, Kasper notes that with *subsistit in* there was a "qualitative leap" from recognizing individual Christians outside the boundaries of the Catholic Church to recognizing "churches and ecclesial communities which, while not in full communion, belong rightfully to the one Church and are a means of salvation for their members." *Subsistit in* means that Christ's Church has its "concrete place" in the Catholic Church. . . . It is here that she is to be concretely found." Full communion requires unity in faith, in sacraments, and in apostolic ministry. The schism between East and West, usually dated from 1054, is very different from the divisions in the Church of the West beginning in the sixteenth century. They are, says Kasper, "different kinds of schisms." While the division between East and West has many political, cultural, and other sources, "the crux of the problem is the issue of the Petrine ministry." In his great encyclical on Christian unity, *Ut Unum Sint* ("That They May Be One"), John Paul II called for fraternal dialogue on how the Petrine ministry exercised by the Bishop of Rome might better serve the cause of unity. The divisions in the West, however, result from the Reformation efforts to establish "another type of church." In various ways, they "conceive of the church as a *creatura verbi* whose point of departure is the word of God and not the Eucharist." A Catholic and eucharistic ecclesiology, by contrast, holds together faith, sacraments, and apostolic ministry—the third being necessary to the second. The 2000 declaration *Dominus Iesus*, Kasper notes, provoked "harsh criticism on the part of Protestant Christians." (Kasper, too, one notes in passing, criticized the declaration.) *Dominus Iesus* recognizes, Kasper says, that "Protestants do not want to be church in the way the Catholic Church desires herself to be; they represent another kind of church and for this reason, according to the criterion of Catholic identity, they are not a church in the proper sense." Therefore the Protestant communities are not "sister churches" in the way that the Orthodox are. Catholicism and Orthodoxy claim to be Church in the same way. It is not a matter of Catholicism denying to Protestant communities an ecclesial dignity that they claim. They expressly do not claim or desire to be Church in the way that Catholicism and Orthodoxy do. The irrevocable commitment of the Catholic Church to ecumenism, says Kasper, is dialogical, pneumatological, and eschatological. That is to say, it is relentlessly open and engaged with other Christian communities, eager to receive the gifts they have cultivated. It is pneumatological in that it recognizes unity is the work of the Holy Spirit, which is not under our control. And it is eschatological in that it is radically dependent upon the promise that Our Lord's prayer for unity among his disciples will be fulfilled. Kasper's address concludes with the final words of the decree on ecumenism, "And hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured forth in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Romans 5:5)."

■ Since Paul Martin replaced Jean Chrétien as prime minister, anti-Americanism in Canada has been less petulantly vulgar, at least at the official level. Last fall President Bush visited Ottawa, the national capital,

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and, with a self-deprecating smile, expressed his appreciation of the crowds that greeted him "waving all five fingers." The eighty percent of Canadians who live within eighty miles of the giant to the south understandably spend more time thinking about the giant than the giant does thinking about them. Uneasiness about the U.S. goes way back, as we are reminded by Claire Hoy's new book, *Canadians in the Civil War* (McArthur & Company). On May 30, 1867, seven thousand of Toronto's 45,000 residents turned out to cheer Jefferson Davis, former president of the Confederacy. Shortly before he assassinated Lincoln, John Wilkes Booth met with Confederate agents in Montreal. And in Chatham, Ontario, John Brown planned his 1859 attack on Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Hoy calls it "one of the most famous—or infamous—excursions in American history." The reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement* criticizes Hoy for giving "the impression that the men Brown opposed have a point of view that should be given a hearing." Leading an armed insurrection, Brown seized not only the military arsenal but the entire town of men, women, and children. People who have been captured by a rebel force don't have a point of view that should be given a hearing? But my point in mentioning the book is to indicate that Canadian uneasiness with us goes way back. Long before the Civil War, there was the War of Independence, plus 1814 and all that. While Canadian school children are today taught that their nation's history began with Pierre Trudeau's 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canadian memories, including a deep ambivalence toward the U.S., are much more deeply entrenched. Although the welcoming crowds were not huge, the five-fingered greeting may be viewed as progress.

■ The *New York Sun* reviews Father John O'Malley's *Four Cultures of the West* (Belknap). There is, says O'Malley, the prophetic culture, the academic/intellectual culture, the humanistic culture, and the artistic culture. The book, while providing a suggestive take on Western history, is much given to the rhetoric of the academic study of rhetoric. The *Sun* reviewer writes, "He claims that the eleventh-century Council of Trent, with its sloganeering and denunciations, belongs to the prophetic tradition, whereas Vatican II, with its metaphorical language and calls for dialogue, is humanistic." Ah yes, the reviewer's discovery of the eleventh-century Council of Trent. It was so strident that many prefer to pretend that it never happened. As it happens, Fr. O'Malley and Avery Cardinal Dulles have gone back and forth in print on whether Vatican II is marked chiefly by continuity or by discontinuity. Dulles comes down on the side of continuity, and in my judgment has the better of the argument. O'Malley is right about the strikingly different rhetoric of Vatican II, but rhetoric, while it is never mere rhetoric, is still to be distinguished from substance. Saying that, I suppose, puts me squarely in the academic/intellectual culture rather than the humanistic culture preferred by O'Malley. At least I'm not in the sloganeering and denunciatory tradition of that awful First Council of Trent. The Second Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, is, of course, an entirely different matter.

■ Medical doctors are, all in all, quite seriously religious. This is reflected in a nationwide survey of more than a thousand physicians by the Louis Finkelstein Institute for Religious and Social Studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary, directed by FT contributor Alan Mittleman. Seventy-four percent of doctors believe that miracles have occurred in the past and 73 percent believe they can occur today. Fifty-five percent say they have seen healings in their patients that defy medical explanation and that they consider miraculous. Fifty-nine percent say they pray for their patients. The report says physicians tend to be more religious than other professionals "perhaps because of their frequent involvement with matters of life and death." That will often do it. Christian doctors are more open to miracles than Jewish doctors. It says here, "Such differences do not indicate that Christians are more religious than Jews. They do indicate that Christians tend to be religious in a more traditional way, while Jews are religious in a liberal way." I'm thinking about it.

■ Recall the grisly case in Missouri in which Lisa Montgomery killed by strangulation a woman who was eight months pregnant. The Associated Press reported: "Authorities said Montgomery, 36, confessed to strangling Bobbie Joe Stinnett of Skidmore, Mo., on Thursday, cutting out the fetus and taking the baby back to Kansas." What happened to the fetus? And where did Montgomery get a baby? Encapsulated in one sentence are the absurdities of thought and language that bedevil liberal talk about abortion.

■ Stanley Fish is a very influential thinker who has been raising hackles, smashing icons, and opening windows for a long time, for years at Duke University and later as dean at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Now he writes in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that the academy had better get ready for a radically new thing: the public and intellectual role of religion. Of course, he says, there have long been courses on religion in the university. "But it is one thing to take

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religion as an object of study and another to take religion seriously. To take religion seriously would be to regard it not as a phenomenon to be analyzed at arm's length, but as a candidate for the truth. In liberal theory, however, the category of truth has been reserved for hypotheses that take their chances in the 'marketplace of ideas.'" But now the notion of a neutral marketplace of ideas is being discredited. Fish writes: "Again the causes of this shift are many and would require volumes to explain, but some things seem obvious. The enormous effort of John Rawls to maintain the boundaries by elevating for public purposes one's identity as a citizen above one's identity as a believer has produced a vast counterliterature of its own, much of it opening up questions that the liberal academic establishment had thought long settled. The debate was joined from another perspective in 1984 when Richard John Neuhaus published his enormously influential *The Naked Public Square*, a passionate argument against the exclusion from the political process of religious discourse. Not long afterward, Neuhaus established the journal FIRST THINGS, a subsidiary of the Institute on Religion and Public Life 'whose purpose is to advance a religiously informed public philosophy for the ordering of society.' Many of the contributors to FIRST THINGS are high-profile academics situated in our most distinguished private and public universities, and it is clear from their commentaries that they see no bright line dividing their religious lives from the lives they pursue as teachers and scholars. Following in the wake of Rawls and Neuhaus, any number of theologians, philosophers, historians, and political theorists have reexamined, debated, challenged, and at times rejected the premises of liberalism, whether in the name of religion, or communitarianism, or multiculturalism." Intellectuals, writes Fish, need to brace themselves for a major adjustment. "To the extent that liberalism's structures have been undermined or at least shaken by these analyses, the perspicuousness and usefulness of distinctions long assumed—reason as opposed to faith, evidence as opposed to revelation, inquiry as opposed to obedience, truth as opposed to belief—have been called into question. And finally (and to return to where we began), the geopolitical events of the past decade and of the past three years especially have re-alerted us to the fact that hundreds of millions of people in the world do not observe the distinction between the private and the public or between belief and knowledge, and that it is no longer possible for us to regard such persons as quaintly premodern or as the needy recipients of our saving (an ironic word) wisdom." Is the academy ready for this very new circumstance? Fish answers: "We had better be, because that is now where the action is. When Jacques Derrida died I was called by a reporter who wanted to know what would succeed high theory and the triumvirate of race, gender, and class as the center of intellectual energy in the academy. I answered like a shot: religion." Stanley Fish and I have had and, I assume, still do have serious differences about what counts as truth, and why (see FT February 1996). But I am grateful for his generous words, and I believe he is essentially (a non-ironic word) right about the changing academic climate with respect to religion.

■ The British papers, as one might expect, have weighed in on the Windsor Report which tried to resolve conflicts provoked by the installation of a gay bishop in the American franchise of Anglicanism. The *Independent* observes, "By all accounts, Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, holds enlightened views about the position of homosexuals within the Communion." Unfortunately, however, he has failed to "project these views" effectively. "If Dr. Williams continues to value the unity of his church more than the principle of toleration, he will jeopardize his claim to be a voice of moral authority in modern Britain." Apparently he must choose between being a moral authority in his church or a moral authority in modern Britain, which gives no more than a fig about his church. More interestingly, he must choose between toleration or unity. It might seem that unity involves tolerating everybody, except that there are those who think that not everybody and everything should be tolerated, and they certainly should not be tolerated since they offend against the principle of tolerance which conflicts with the principle of unity, or something like that. Anglicans, and Brits in general, are famous for muddling through, but this may be a muddle too far.

■ Eyebrows of some Jewish leaders were raised by a finding that seemed to indicate declining Jewish support for Israel. In the 2004 annual American Jewish Committee survey, people were asked: Which one of the following qualities do you consider most important to your Jewish identity? Answers: Being part of the Jewish people (43 percent), Religious observance (14), Support for Israel (6), A commitment to social justice (20), Something else (16), Not sure (1). In the same survey, however, people are asked: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Caring about Israel is a very important part of my being a Jew." Seventy-four percent agree and 25 percent disagree. Go figure. The survey, and the Jewish vote in the November election, reflect the continuing left-liberal predominance. Asked about anti-Semitism in America, 87 percent said it will remain the same or

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increase in the next several years. On the other hand, only 27 percent said anti-Semitism in America is a "very serious problem," with 67 percent saying it is "somewhat of a problem," and six percent believing it is "not a problem at all."

■ The director of the Anti-Defamation League, Abraham Foxman, takes a Goldwater-like stance on protecting America from religion. "Extremism in the defense of the naked public square is no vice," etc. Writing in the *New York Sun*, Foxman complains about Justice Antonin Scalia's address on religion and the Constitution at a Manhattan synagogue. He accuses Scalia of "arguing that the 'Founding Fathers never used the phrase "separation of church and state."'" Scalia may have observed that, or noted that, or pointed out that, but I am sure he did not *argue* that. One does not "argue" a simple fact. Although one may have to point it out very forcefully to someone like Mr. Foxman who, blithely indifferent to fact, asserts that the Founders "constructed the constitutional wall between church and state." The Founders adopted a First Amendment containing a religion clause that, in the service of the free exercise of religion, forbids the establishment of a national religion. What that means, as Justice Scalia rightly argues, is a matter of continuing democratic deliberation. Fortunately, and despite the ADL, that deliberation continues and is likely to intensify in the years ahead.

■ Tyler Golson is an American in Damascus who teaches the children of the Syrian upper class. He is also a Democrat who supported John Kerry and was surprised to discover that his students were enthusiastically backing Bush. This despite the fact that the U.S. has placed sanctions on Syria and accused it of being part of the terror nexus. Bush is, the students said, a good man, a strong leader, and, most important, "a good Christian." Golson reflects: "And thus I came to realize something that the Democrats could never admit: that there exists a support base for both the Republicans' domestic and foreign agenda among the very people we thought most opposed current U.S. policy. The cultural background and value systems which inform many of these young Arabs' outlook on the world mean they will always favor men like Bush over men like Kerry. The tenets of faith, family, and, yes, 'moral issues' determine the overall political leanings of a considerable number of the Middle East's future leaders, in rejection of Democratic stump issues like increased liberalism, internationalism, and scientific progress. Though Democrats are often quick to criticize their opponents for seeing the issues in stark black and white, 'us and them' terms, perhaps they ought to step back from their own obsession with 'red' and 'blue' dichotomies and recognize this nuance of Middle Eastern reality. Having a truly even-handed and practical approach to peace in the Arab world means realizing that not everyone, and certainly not all of the elites in Arab society, sympathize with the anti-American movements taking place within their own ranks, and that these heartland Arabs could prove a valuable ally in future U.S.-Arab relations."

■ After the November election, I speculated that some pro-abortionists will start thinking about modifying their pitch, perhaps by coming out in support of some limits on partial birth abortion. They could then present themselves as "moderately pro-choice" or even, with some linguistic sleight of hand, "moderately pro-life." Among the first out of the gate is Frances Kissling, founder and head of Catholics for a Free Choice (CFC), an organization that has received millions of dollars from Ford, Rockefeller, and other major foundations to counter the influence of the Catholic Church on the life questions. Kissling, who is sometimes referred to as Frances Quisling, has written a long article in *Conscience*, CFC's magazine, "Is There Life After *Roe*? How to Think about the Fetus," in which she warns pro-choicers that they are losing the battle because they come across as callous and unfeeling toward the fate of the baby who is killed. Pro-choicers should, she says, "present abortion as a complex issue that involves loss—and be saddened by that loss." Eleanor Smeal, former head of NOW, is not persuaded. "I don't hear her saying that there is joy sometimes. I think if an eleven-year-old is pregnant, it's a great relief for her to have an abortion." Not that Smeal is prepared to limit abortion to troubled eleven-year-olds or, for that matter, to limit it at all. Lynn Paltrow, director of National Advocates for Pregnant Women, a New York-based pro-abortion group, is somewhat more sympathetic to Kissling's argument. "We definitely need a paradigm shift in the reproductive rights movement," she says. "We've done a terrible job of articulating our beliefs in terms of values." By values Paltrow means "protecting women from the consequences of being forced to carry unwanted pregnancies." As best I can make it out, she's saying that they've done a terrible job of articulating their support for abortion in terms of their support for abortion. In her article, Kissling says that pro-abortionists should not, for instance, reflexively fight the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, which would require women to be told about the pain experienced by the child being aborted. Kissling says the bill is an opportunity "to show that people can support the right to abortion and care about the fetus at the same time." They can "honor both law and morality [by]

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trying to change the legislation to say that fetal anesthesia should be respectfully offered as an option." That is the consistent pro-choice position, giving the mother the choice of anesthetizing the baby before having the baby killed. As it happens, the worry of pro-abortionists about the perception that they are callous toward nascent human life is nothing new. The standard pro-abortion text on this is the 1977 book by Magda Denes, *In Necessity and Sorrow*. That was nearly thirty years ago, and over the years the delusion that an unlimited license to commit an unspeakable evil can be disguised or excused by a display of moral handwringing has become ever less convincing to ever more Americans.

■ You have perhaps seen reviews of Philip Roth's new novel *The Plot Against America*, in which Charles Lindbergh was elected president in 1940 and America cozied up to Nazi Germany, creating a very nasty circumstance for American Jews, including Philip Roth and his family in Newark, New Jersey. Ruth Wisse, who teaches Yiddish and comparative literature at Harvard, says the book has considerable literary merit, at least until the plot peters out at the end, but the whole enterprise is wrongheaded: "But if one does not want to oblige today's American Jews to do anything about 'a genuine anti-Semitic threat,' why, then, write a novel explicitly aimed at exposing them to 'the danger'? Why ratchet up the peril, raise the temperature of fear? The question, alas, answers itself. Many American Jews, including, it would seem, some of the most enthusiastic reviewers of this book, define their own Jewish consciousness and values not by means of religious worship, observance of commandments, community affiliation, or work on behalf of Israel, but through commemorations of the Holocaust. Behind *The Plot Against America* stretch the many years that American Jews have consecrated to Holocaust education and Holocaust simulation, activities based on the notion that there is moral and spiritual merit in the vicarious re-experiencing of so dire a past. But while the original impulse behind such commemoration was linked to the vow of Never Again!, implying a need to take effective political action on behalf of the Jewish people, Holocaust memorialization has increasingly slipped into little more than self-indulgent paranoia. For all Roth's intelligence, and for all his sophistication in turning this tendency to literary advantage, his book also exemplifies it." Wisse writes of Roth's "nostalgia for a time when anti-Semitism was in flower." Roth envisions an America under the "threat of becoming fascist," but, says Wisse, the real threat today is anti-Israel, anti-American, and frequently anti-Semitic passions on the left of the ideological spectrum. "The danger [the book] points up is not the danger it describes; the danger it points up is of political infantilization." And Philip Roth thought he was safe just because he had survived the American pogroms.

■ The blogosphere is filled with letters and reports from soldiers in Iraq. Most of them speak about their satisfaction in doing something good and difficult, even noble. It doesn't prove anything one way or another about the justice or wisdom of the war, but I question the humanity of anyone who is not more than a little moved by their testimony. Here is Sam Ross, a paratrooper wounded in Baghdad: "I lost my left leg, just below the knee. Lost my eyesight. . . . I have shrapnel in pretty much every part of my body. Got my finger blown off. . . . I had a hole blown through my right leg. . . . It hurts a lot, that's about it. You know, not really anything major. Just little things. . . . It was the best experience of my life." William James wrote about the search for a moral equivalent of war, and Jimmy Carter, by an impressive stretch of moral imagination, suggested we find that equivalent in cutting back on gas consumption. The phrase "band of brothers" was cheapened in the last presidential campaign, and King Henry perhaps exaggerated when he declared,

> And gentlemen in England now-a-bed
> Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
> And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
> That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

And yet, even while they may prefer to lie abed, there are those who cannot help but wonder, however self-indulgently, at what the Sam Rosses have come to know.

■ The story is told of a nobleman who came to Mecca, curious about a new prophet then being much discussed. He was warned against the prophet's magic tricks and was told to plug his ears if he encountered people reading his message, in Arabic, of course. He thought to himself: Why should I block my ears just because someone is reading a text? He listened to the reading, and then screamed, "By God, never before have I heard a word more beautiful!" He converted on the spot. Navid Kermani, a scholar of Islam who writes in German, says the Sirens in Homer's *Odyssey* could not have been more seductive. Today, however, radical Muslims, commonly called Islamists, such as Osama bin Laden, are imposing a stifling literalism upon the Qur'an that destroys

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the traditional accent on the text's aesthetic appeal. Kermani writes: "The phenomenon of a conversion inspired—in the narrow sense—by an aesthetic experience, which forms a permanent motif in Islamic history, is found relatively seldom in Christianity. As far as we know from autobiographical testimonies, the legendary conversions and initiation events in Christian history—Paul, Augustine, Pascal, or Luther, for example—were triggered by remarkable experiences, but not primarily aesthetic ones. This does not mean that the evolution and practice of Christianity—or any other religion—can be imagined without the aesthetic fascination of specific sites, texts, hymns, images, scents, actions, gestures, and garments. Protestantism would certainly never have spread so quickly in the German-speaking regions if it had not been for the rhetorical force of the Lutheran Bible. Yet in the portrayal of their past by the Christian, or more specifically, Protestant community, the aesthetic momentum is less significant, however relevant its role in religious practice. Few Christians would claim that the disciples followed Jesus because he was so handsome or spoke so eloquently, or suggest that the triumph of Christianity was due to the stylistic perfection of the Gospels. There were doubtless conversions to Christianity inspired by the beauty of the Scriptures, but these are not treated as a literary topos in the body of testimony to the propagation of Christianity. For Muslims, however, the aesthetic fascination with the Qur'an is an integral part of their religious tradition. It is this collective reflection on the aesthetics of the text which specifically defines the religious world of Islam. It is not the aesthetic experience as such—this seems to occur during the reception of any sacred texts. Rather it is the rationalization of aesthetic experience, culminating in a distinct theological doctrine of poetics, the *i'jaz*, based on the inimitability of the Qur'an. This line of reasoning—highly peculiar from a Christian perspective—involves believing in the Qur'an because the language is too perfect to have been composed by man." Traditional Muslim scholars insist upon a "plenitude of interpretation," says Kermani. "They know that if the Qur'an is listened to as a revelation and as a literary monument and body of sound, this will open up a whole cosmos of signs, meanings, and interpretations, and allow it to be read in a multitude of different ways. It is an approach diametrically opposed to the monopoly on interpretation advocated by Islamists. The intellectual conflict concerning the Qur'an that is being played out today in the Islamic world—and the violence that issues from it—turns out to be, *inter alia*, an argument about aesthetics. There is a danger that the knowledge of the tradition of plenitude, a sense of the wealth and beauty of the text, may be lost. I spoke earlier of the Sirenic effect of Qur'anic recitation. As Franz Kafka remarked, 'Now the Sirens have an even more terrible weapon than singing: their silence.'"

■ The thing about my friend Midge Decter is that you never know where she stands. I joke, of course. In a recent speech at Hillsdale College in Michigan on gay activism, she acknowledged that some might think it impolite of her to point it out but "homosexual men are essentially no more like lesbians than heterosexual men are like the women whom they either merely pursue or marry." She goes on to explain: "Female homosexuals who have achieved coupledom tend to approximate this arrangement far more closely than do male homosexuals—even those male homosexuals who remain together for life (and who are, by the way, many, many fewer in number). Why is this? Because, again, women are different from men. They wish—correction: need—to be monogamous and faithful; it is in their nature. Men, on the other hand, in the most elementary sense of the nature of males, have impulses to promiscuity. A woman says to her prospective mate, 'Be faithful to me and I promise that I will make it worth your while.' It is a bargain men who marry not only agree to but in a very important sense are saved by. Being women, lesbians are most often given to a facsimile of the same deal. Moreover, they can be, and often are, mothers and thus inclined to stability. Men who are sexually attracted to, and even truly love, other men have no such exchange to make. In an all-male society, promiscuity is thus the norm. And as things have grown easier and more comfortable for men to be openly, often flagrantly, homosexual in our ever more tolerant society, the promiscuity of the bathhouse and orgy has become ever more the norm. Hence, for example, the wildfire of HIV and AIDS (and now, I am told, certain even newer forms of venereal disease). That is why the right to marriage, fought for with every weapon at their command by homosexual men, would—or must I say 'will'—be largely acted on by lesbians. Why, then, are these men fighting so hard for it? The answer is, the right to legal marriage that they are demanding is not about *them*—it is *about the rest of us*. It is, and is meant to be, a spit in the eye of the way we live. And whatever the variety of efforts to oppose it—another law or even a whole set of laws, let's say, or a constitutional amendment—none of it will matter unless and until all the nice and decent people in America begin to understand that we are in a crisis, and it must be up to them to sustain, and with all good cheer defend, the way they lead their lives." It is a mistake, she says, to trust politi-

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cians to fix our moral and social problems. Some of them are heroes, but all of them are dependent upon pleasing their constituencies and therefore naturally go for a compromise. But, says Decter, "It is not compromise that the homosexual rights movement is after. Nor do they even want the standing in the community that heterosexuals have. They are *radicals*. What they want is not a room of their own; they want to bring the whole damned house down." Then for the peroration: "So if the lady tends to be against a constitutional amendment and opposes unequivocally the idea of civil union, what does she want? The answer is, I want us to stick up for ourselves and the way we live, be as mighty a force in the culture as we are entitled to be if nothing else by virtue of our sheer numbers. I want us to resist all attacks on the way we live, whether from our kids, our grandkids, their momentary culture heroes, or from the overpaid, mindless, sheep-like followers of fashion in the press and academic community who make so much noise in the world around us every day. In other words, let's take back our country. Let us be decent, civil, and even loving to our homosexual fellow citizens; but draw the line on what they stand for and on everything else that makes light of our existence. For the privilege of living in the most nobly founded, the freest, and the richest country in the world we owe nothing less, not only to ourselves but also to the oncoming tide of generations. We are given the choice of leaving them with a blessing or a curse. Not so many people in the world have that choice. I hope we can go down in history as having deserved it." Take my advice, you don't want to mess with Midge Decter.

■ Chalk up another one for the Becket Fund, that indomitable defender of religious liberty. The Ursuline Academy in Wilmington, Delaware, was not amused when a teacher signed an ad celebrating *Roe v. Wade*. She was fired. She sued the academy and the diocese. The academy and Bishop Michael Saltarelli went to the United States District Court, backed by the Becket Fund, and the suit was dismissed. The opinion by Judge Kent Jordan contains several memorable lines. There is this: "To test the Plaintiff's theory would require an analysis of Catholic doctrine to determine whether the decision to employ a teacher of a different religious background constitutes an affront to the Catholic faith and, if so, whether it is an affront of at least the same seriousness as the Plaintiff's repudiation of Catholic doctrine on when life begins. . . ." And then this: "It is not the place of this or any other court to say what system of beliefs constitutes 'true' Catholicism or makes for a 'good' Catholic. Ours is a system which, wonderfully, forbids any intrusion of the sort." The academy and the bishop are to be commended for standing firm when it would have been easy to cave, or seek a convenient out by means of a financial settlement.

■ The "moral values" factor in last November's election will keep the analysts busy for a long time. Here is some trivia grist to add to the research mills. According to *Brandweek*, the advertising magazine, a survey of a thousand Americans reveals that 24 percent of Democratic voters but only 20 percent of Republicans admit to having stolen a towel from a hotel. But that difference may be within the margin of error, or maybe Republicans are not as honest in admitting their wrongdoing. More interesting is the finding that 23 percent of Republicans speak to their parents several times a week, compared with 14 percent of Democrats. Four percent of Democrats say they never speak to their parents, compared with only one percent of Republicans. Forty percent of Democrats say they are on "very unfriendly" terms with their ex-wives or husbands, while only 18 percent of Republicans are. Perhaps pertinent to the "pro-family" agenda, nine percent of Republicans have no brothers or sisters, while 14 percent of Democrats are without siblings. These are things I thought you might want to know.

■ On several fronts, Protestant theologians continue to work at reappropriating dimensions of Christian faith and life that were abandoned during the tumultuous course of the divisions of the sixteenth century. This is true also with respect to thought and piety regarding Mary, as is addressed in a fine collection of essays edited by Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson, *Mary, Mother of God* (Eerdmans). In his essay, David Yeago, professor of systematic theology at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina, examines the scriptural testimony about Mary in sympathetic conversation with John Paul II's encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*. A close reading of the biblical texts, Yeago persuasively argues, demonstrates not only that Mary is inseparable from the plan of salvation in the Word becoming flesh, which should be obvious, but that she has a continuing relationship with the Church as prototype, mother, and "archprophet." To the Protestant objection that Mariology is not "necessary to salvation," Yeago writes: "The goal of faith and theology is not to see how *little* of Scripture we can take seriously and still be saved; the goal is the *maximum* of integrity in taking seriously and holding together in our understanding the *whole canon* of testimony with which the Church has been

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provided by the Spirit. After all, the New Testament canon itself is superfluous to what is 'necessary to salvation,' since the foundational apostolic preaching went on without it. The question of 'necessary for salvation' arises when faith and mission have lost their way; [we are called], not to a reductionist purism, but rather to make distinctions *within* the totality of the biblical witness, in order to identify the chief point at which Scripture aims and to trace the ways in which its various aspects hang together to make that point." "Mary's paradigmatic role," writes Yeago, "is different in *kind* from that of her Son: she is not the Redeemer but the prototype of the redeemed; she is not the one in whom we participate but the paradigm of that participation." Mary, in the view of some, is but the contingent means for the accomplishment of the birth of the Messiah. She has no necessary role; any woman might have served that purpose. "Mary is a contingent phenomenon," responds Yeago. "But if the gospel is true, then *nothing* in the economy of salvation, indeed nothing in creation nor creation itself, is 'necessary' in that sense. God's love and freedom are prior to all necessity; all that is, and especially the mystery of salvation, is a meaningful concatenation of contingencies rooted in God's free election. Mary, like Israel, like the form of the sacraments, like the make-up of the biblical canon, is simply one more such contingency." It is not as though Mary, having played her part, is then moved off the stage of the continuing drama of the Church. Yeago quotes Martin Luther: "Therefore Mary is Christ's Mother, and the Mother of us all, although he alone lies on her lap.... If he is ours, then we are to be in his place; where he is, there we also are to be, and everything he has is ours, and therefore his Mother is also our Mother." *Mary, Mother of God* is a cautious probing by mainly Protestant thinkers who are keenly aware that most Protestants are inclined to assume that Mariology is synonymous with Mariolatry. There is an understandable anxiety to make clear that, by embracing lost dimensions of Catholic Christianity, one is not, as it is commonly put, "betraying the Reformation heritage." Catholics are tempted to be impatient, thinking such anxiety and caution to be excessive. The temptation should be resisted. In a time when the prospect of ecclesial reconciliation—whether with Lutherans, Anglicans, or any other communities of Western Christianity—seems increasingly remote, theological explorations such as the essays in *Mary, Mother of God* should be welcomed as a necessary sowing of seeds that may bear fruit in a harvest of Christian unity at a time known only to God. We do not need to know. One is reminded of Jesus' response to Peter when he wanted to know about the future of the apostle John: "If it is my will that he is to remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me." Following Christ means, among many things, working for the fulfillment of his prayer that his disciples be one in a manner visible to the world. If it is his will that that happen a hundred or two hundred years from now, or not until the End Time, what is that to us? The quest for Christian unity, to which, as John Paul II has repeatedly said, the Catholic Church is irrevocably committed, needs no further justification other than that it is inescapably part of following Christ.

■ We've been here before. Well, not precisely here, but at a place that bears striking similarities. Christopher Levenick reviews Richard Carwardine's *Lincoln*, in the course of which he writes: "Northern Protestants were an indispensable part of the Republican coalition that swept Lincoln into power and stood steadfastly behind him through the darkest days of the Civil War. Carwardine, an Oxford don and leading expert on American religious history, is unusually attentive to the often neglected alignment of Northern evangelicals with the emerging Republican Party. Lincoln, he explains, grasped that within the United States the most potent source of political power was public opinion, and that the deepest resonances of American opinion were religious. Even if Lincoln's personal beliefs never quite matched those of his supporters, he understood their faith intimately and spoke its language fluently. As a result, free-state Protestants, the heart and soul of the Republican coalition, clutched him to their collective bosom. (Indeed, complaints from Democrats about this alliance sound quaintly familiar; Republicans, they relentlessly complained, were 'a religious Sect' possessed of 'a holy zeal for its one idea.') 'It is no overstatement,' Carwardine writes, 'to suppose that the combined religious engines of the Union—and the motor of evangelical Protestantism in particular—did more than any other single force to mobilize support' for Lincoln in the antebellum peace, and for the Union in the hour of war." Many scholars have admired or decried Lincoln's subtleties in prudentially adjusting arguments for the moral legitimation of the war, beginning with saving the Union and ending with emancipation of the slaves. But there was, writes Levenick, another dimension to this rhetorical shift: "By harnessing the war effort to traditional evangelical themes of sin and atonement, bondage and liberation, Lincoln appealed directly to the heart of mainstream Protestant orthodoxy, the most potent source of American nationalism. A major (and neglected) aspect of Lincoln's political prudence was thus his ability to

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channel the religious sensibilities of the Union. But here, as always, moderation tempered Lincoln's rhetoric; the same man who summoned a crusading zeal would concede in the hour of victory that 'the Almighty has His own purposes.'" In mid-life, says Carwardine, Lincoln's religion was a mix of "rationalist, Universalist, Unitarian, fatalist," and "residually Calvinist" elements. But, he suggests, his Christian convictions deepened as the challenges he faced became more severe. Quite apart from the endless debate over whether the South had a legal or moral right to secede, there is near-unanimous agreement that he was our most morally and, yes, theologically profound president. His belief that America is an "almost chosen people" (with the accent on the "almost") is strikingly pertinent to today's debates about America's part in the purposes of the Almighty.

■ Nigel Rees, the oft-quoted quotemaster, is not entirely satisfied that it is by William James. But the story is that James penned it late one night while experimenting, as he was wont to do, with various drugs.

> Hogamous, higamous
> Man is polygamous
> Higamous, hogamous
> Woman monogamous.

In case you needed another argument for the defense of marriage.

■ It is a good and necessary thing for Christians to be honest, even painfully honest, about their own history, including the terrible things that Christians have done to one another and to others, notably to Jews. This is part of "the purification of memories" for which John Paul II has called, and which he has so energetically practiced. We should avoid, however, acts of apparent contrition that are, in fact, acts of detraction against our forebears in the faith. In the Q&A following a recent campus lecture, a Catholic in the audience declared that a Catholic had no right to criticize any Jew in view of the fact that, until the Second Vatican Council, the Church conducted pogroms against Jews and held Jews guilty of killing Christ. Well, not quite. Pogrom is a Yiddish word referring to massacres in Russia. In the West, especially from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, there were very bloody and popular persecutions of Jews, who were accused not only of killing Christ but of desecrating the Host, poisoning the water supply, and murdering Christian children for their rituals. The persecutions were opposed and the charges repeatedly refuted by popes and leading churchmen such as Bernard of Clairvaux, but popular mania sometimes prevailed. Nonetheless, the claim that the Church held Jews uniquely responsible for the death of Christ until Vatican II is still commonly heard. Of course, some Catholics called Jews "Christ killers," and probably some still do. Over the years, I have received vulgar and overtly anti-Semitic protests against my involvement in Jewish-Christian dialogue, some of them claiming that Jews have only gotten what they deserved because they killed Jesus. I expect there will always be people on the fringes who think that, and there were once influential figures in Christian history who thought that. But that is not the teaching of the Church, nor was the teaching recently changed at Vatican II. Here, for instance, is the sixteenth-century *Catechism of the Council of Trent* under the heading "Reasons Why Christ Suffered": "Furthermore men of all ranks and conditions were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. Gentiles and Jews were the advisers, the authors, the ministers of his passion: Judas betrayed him, Peter denied him, all the rest deserted him. . . . In this guilt are involved all those who fall frequently into sin; for, as our sins consigned Christ the Lord to the death of the cross, most certainly those who wallow in sin and iniquity crucify to themselves again the Son of God, as far as in them lies, and make a mockery of him. This guilt seems more enormous in us than in the ancient Jews, since according to the testimony of the same Apostle: if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory; while we, on the contrary, professing to know him, yet denying him by our actions, seem in some sort to lay violent hands on him." Of course, it must be admitted that what the Church teaches, then and now, is not always received. Which gives all of us steady work in trying more effectively to set forth what the Church teaches.

■ It's fine and dandy for you to go through life blithely rejoicing in the good, the true, and the beautiful. You're probably not a Calvinist and have never heard of TULIP (*T*otal Depravity, *U*nconditional Election, *L*imited Atonement, *I*rresistible Grace, *P*erseverance of the Saints). Allen P. Rich ponders the Calvinistically complexified life in the *Nicotine Theological Journal*. Last October, Ichiro Suzuki, right fielder for the Seattle Mariners, broke the record for most hits in one season. After receiving congratulations, he walked over to shake the hand of Frances Sisler Drochelman, the eighty-one-year-old daughter of George Sisler who had set the earlier record in 1920. Rich says it was a moving and noble gesture, but can a Calvinist view it as a "good" act? According to the seventeenth-century Westminster Confession, the only good works are those that conform to God's

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revealed will and stem from a "true and lively faith." Since Suzuki is not a Christian, never mind a Calvinist, acts such as his may look good, "yet," says Westminster, "because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner according to the Word; nor to a right end, the glory of God, they are therefore sinful." At the same time, the neglect of such good works "is more sinful and displeasing to God." Allen Rich comments: "What they could have expressed possibly better was a conception of Total Depravity that encouraged acts of courage, generosity, loyalty, and graciousness." Yes, Westminster does seem a bit weak on encouragement. Rich says, "The part of these deeds that displeases God should not obscure the pleasure they give to other men and women." We need not be quite so grim as God is? The conclusion, according to Rich: "However Ichiro Suzuki did it, whether through a nonredemptive work of God upon his heart, or his own emulation of the goodness inherent in the created order, his was an act in which even the crustiest of Calvinists should delight." May we applaud now? Permission granted. But not blithely!

■ Although the subject is very technical, there was considerable publicity given to a discussion at the President's Council on Bioethics meeting last December. The subject was a proposal on which Dr. William Hurlbut of Stanford University, and a member of the Council, had been working for some years. He proposed a way of getting embryonic stem cells without creating or destroying embryos. Some pro-lifers are unhappy with any attention paid embryonic stem cells, claiming that what is needed for research purposes, and what in fact is far more promising, is available from adults. Some scientists who insist on the need for embryonic stem cells are also unhappy with the Hurlbut proposal. There is reason to believe that at least some of them want no limitations on research at all and are committed to the development of "fetus farming," meaning the creation and killing of human babies for experimentation and spare parts. In the Hurlbut proposal, called "altered nuclear transfer," embryonic stem cells would be made available without creating embryos. A human embryo is any whole, living member of the species homo sapiens in the embryonic stage, which includes the stages of zygote, morula, and blastocyst. A human embryo is that which, barring natural failure or lethal intervention, will become what everybody recognizes as a baby. In "altered nuclear transfer" what is created never could and never would become a baby and, it therefore follows, is never a human being at any point. It is, so to speak, human material, as an amputated ear is human material. Otherwise it could not provide human stem cells. But it is not a human being. It is human life but it is not a human life. One may find any such experimentation with human life repugnant, but consider that the alternative is the wholesale creation and destruction of embryos that is now being carried out by Harvard and other universities, and is being encouraged and funded by states such as California and New Jersey. (President Bush's limited ban is only on federally funded research.) The Hurlbut proposal does seem to hold a measure of promise. The very thoughtful Richard Doerflinger of the pro-life office of the Catholic bishops conference testified at the December meeting of the Council on Bioethics. While expressing his skepticism toward the claims made for the unique benefits of research on embryonic stem cells, he said: "I see no moral reason at this time to oppose the further exploration of this theory in an animal model so its feasibility can better be assessed. This gives scientists an opportunity to show that their real commitment is to scientific progress, not to the exploitation of the embryo, and gives organizations like mine an opportunity to show our concern is respect for human life, not a fear of scientific research." That, it seems to me, gets it just about right.

■ Of the books one goes back to again and again, Augustine's *City of God* is near the top of the list. I have it in mind to do a florilegium of quotes from that great work one of these months. Last summer I once again read it through up at the family cottage in Quebec and was struck as I had not been before by how much of a Roman Augustine was. The conventional notion is that Augustine was writing the book as the Empire was collapsing around his head and he was proposing the heavenly city as the alternative to the ruin of all temporal orders. It is not quite that simple. "The Roman Empire," he wrote, "has been shaken rather than transformed, and that happened to it at other periods, before the preaching of Christ's name; and it recovered. There is no need to despair of its recovery at this present time. Who knows what is God's will in this matter?" While all temporal orders are marked by the lust for power and earthly glory, not all are equal. Augustine quotes approvingly a passage from the pagan historian Sallust that might put some readers in mind of another temporal order that some are now (mistakenly) calling an empire: "As soon as their power advanced, thanks to their laws, their moral standards, and the increase of their territory, and they were observed to be very flourishing and very powerful, then, as generally happens in human history, prosperity gave rise to envy. Neighboring kings and people therefore made trial of them

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in war: only a few of their friends came to their help: the rest, paralyzed with fear, kept well out of danger. But the Romans, alert both in peace and war, acted with energy, made their preparations, gave mutual encouragement, advanced to meet the enemy, and with their arms defended their liberty, their country, their parents. Then, when they had by their courage dispersed those perils, they brought help to their friends, and won friendship rather by rendering services than by receiving them." Especially in the first half of *City of God*, the reader may be puzzled about why Augustine goes into such extraordinary detail in engaging and rebutting the myriad superstitions and wrongheaded philosophies of the pagan world. But then, when one recognizes how much of a Roman Augustine was, the puzzlement vanishes. These were his people, his peers, his fellow intellectuals; they were leading others astray and, in doing so, imperiling also the worldly good of their common life in the Empire. Augustine certainly had no delusions that any temporal order, including the Roman Empire, could provide the lasting peace of right order. Only the City of God could do that. But the City of God, on its journey through time from Abraham to the consummation of the kingdom of Christ, is not indifferent to questions of approximate justice in the city of man. Augustine's is a perspective to be recommended to Christians of our time, and of all times until Our Lord returns in glory. I make no claim that the discovery of Augustine the Roman is original with me, but, in this rereading of *City of God*, it became more strikingly evident to me.

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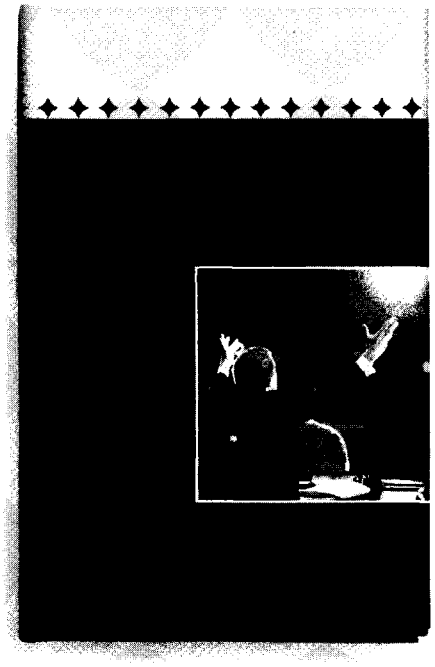

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